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THE
YOUTH OF WASHINGTON

"MY BROTHER COMFORTED ME IN MY DISAPPOINTMENT."

Author's Definitive Edition

THE YOUTH OF WASHINGTON

TOLD IN THE FORM OF AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY

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[Works. v. II]

NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1909

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Published October, 1904

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

TO

JOHN S. BILLINGS

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF

FORTY YEARS OF

FRIENDSHIP

THE
YOUTH OF WASHINGTON

"And if I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired: but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto."—2 *Maccabees xv.* 38.

THE YOUTH OF WASHINGTON

DIARY—NOVEMBER, 1797

I

MY retirement from official duties as President has enabled me to restore order on my plantations, and in some degree to repair the neglected buildings which are fallen to decay. The constant coming of guests—moved, I fear, more by curiosity than by other reasons—is diminished owing to snows, unusual at this period of the year.

Owing to these favouring conditions, I have now some small leisure to reflect on a life which has been too much one of action and of public interests to admit, hitherto, of that kind of retrospection which is natural, and, as it seems to me, fitting in a man of my years, who has little to look forward to and much to look back upon.

My recent uneasiness lest I should be called upon to conduct a war against our old allies, the French, is much abated, and I feel more free to consider my private affairs. I am too far advanced in the vale of life to bear much buffeting, and I have satisfaction in the belief we have escaped a new war for which the nation has not yet the strength. For sure I am, if this country is preserved in tranquillity twenty years longer, it may bid defiance in a just cause to any powers whatever, such in that time will be its power, wealth, and resources.

Increasing infirmity and too frequent aches and ailments remind me that I am nearing the awful moment when I must bid adieu to sublunary things, and appear before that Divine Being to whom alone my country owes the success with which we have been blessed. But the great Disposer of events is also the Being who has formed the instruments of his will and left them responsible to the arbitration of conscience. Therefore I have of late spent much time in considering my past life, and how it might have been better or more successful, and in thankfulness that it has escaped many pitfalls.

My reflections have brought back to mind a remark which seems to me just, made by my aide, Colonel Tilghman, a man more given to philosophic reflection than I have been. He asked me if I did not think there was something providential in the way each period of my life had been an education for that which followed it. I said that this idea had at times presented itself to my mind, and when I betrayed curiosity, he went on to say that my very early education in self-reliance and my training as a surveyor of wild lands had fitted me for frontier warfare, that this in turn had prepared me for action on a larger stage, and that all through the greater war my necessities called for constant dealing with political questions, and with men who were not soldiers. He thought that this had in turn educated me for the position to which my countrymen summoned me at a later time.

As I was silent for a little, this gentleman, who became my aide-de-camp in June, 1780, and for whom I conceived a warm and lasting affection, thinking his remark might have been considered a liberty, said as much, excusing himself.

I replied that, so far from annoying me, I found what he had to say interesting.

When, recently, these remarks of Colonel Tilghman recurred to me, I felt that they were correct, and dwelling upon them at this remote time, my interest in the sequence of the events of my youthful life assumed an importance which has led me of late to endeavour, with the aid of my diaries, to refresh my memories of a past which had long ceased to engage my attention.

I remember writing once that any recollections of my later life, distinct from the general history of the war, would rather hurt my feelings than tickle my pride while I lived. I do not think vanity is a trait of my character. I would rather leave posterity to think and say what they please of me. Those who served with me in war and peace will be judged as we become subjects of history, and time may unfold more than prudence ought to disclose. Concerning this matter I wrote to Colonel Humphreys that if I had talent for what he desired me to do, I had not leisure to turn my thoughts to commentaries. Consciousness of a defective education, and want of leisure, I thought, unfitted me for such an

undertaking. I did, however, answer certain questions put to me by Colonel Humphreys concerning the Indian wars, but he has, so far, made no use of these notes.

One of these considerations does not so much apply at present, for I possess the leisure, and in recording my early reminiscences I shall do so for myself alone, and assuredly shall find no satisfaction in comments on the conduct of other officers who, like myself, were honestly engaged in learning, and at the same time practising, a business in which none of us had a large experience. I shall confine my attention to recalling the events of my youth, and as I hate deception even where the imagination only is concerned, I shall try, for my own satisfaction, to deal merely with facts. General Hamilton, whose remarks I have often just reason to remember, once wrote me that no man had ever written a true biography of himself, that he was apt to blame himself excessively or to be too much prone to self-defence. He went on to state that an autobiography was written either from vanity and to present the man favourably to posterity, or because he desired for his own pleasure in the study of himself to recall the events of his career.

In the latter case there is no need of publication.

It is only in order to such self-examination as that to which he refers that I am induced to set down the remembrances of my earlier days, and because writing of them will, I feel, enable me more surely to bring them back to mind. I have no other motive.

Whatever just ambitions I have had have been fully gratified; indeed, far beyond my wishes. The great Searcher of hearts is my witness that I have now no wish which aspires beyond the humble and happy lot of living and dying a private citizen on my own farm. In my estimation, more permanent and genuine happiness is to be found in the sequestered walks of connubial life, so long denied me in the war, than in the more tumultuous and imposing scenes of successful ambition. Nor can I complain. I am retiring here within myself. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and with heartfelt satisfaction, feeling that my life has been on the whole happy, I will move gently down the stream until I sleep with my fathers.

There are indeed not many circumstances

in my life before the war which it now gives me pain to recall. I could not truthfully say this of that great contest, nor of the political struggles of my service as President. Mr. Adams, or perhaps Mr. Jefferson, once said of me that I was a man too sensitive to condemnation. This I believe to be correct, but I have not discovered that my ability to decide was ever largely affected by either unreasonable blame or the bribes of flattery.

The treachery of men who professed for me friendship, and the intrigues of those who, like Conway, Lee, Gates, and Rush, used ignoble means to weaken my authority when it was of the utmost importance to our common cause that it should be strengthened, were calculated to give pain chiefly because they lessened my usefulness. Nor am I ever willing to dwell upon the treason of Arnold, which cost me the most painful duty of the war, and lost to the country a great soldier, who had not the virtue to wait until, in the course of events, his services would obtain their reward. It is, however, somewhat to be wondered at that in so long a war, where hope did at times seem to disappear, the catalogue of traitors was so small. It is strange that there were not

more, for few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder. As to ill-natured and unjust reflections on my conduct, I feel, and have felt, everything that hurts the sensibility of a gentleman, but to persevere in one's duty and be silent is the best answer to calumny.

Dr. Franklin has wisely said that no examples are so useful to a man as those which his own conduct affords, and that he was right in his opinion I have reason to believe. This I have observed to be true of anger, to which I am, or was, subject. I flatter myself that I have now learned to command my temper, although it is still on rare occasions likely to become mutinous. I do not observe that mere abuse ever troubles me long, but in the presence of cowardice or ingratitude I am subject to fits of rage.

Arnold's treason distressed me, but the treachery of one of my cabinet, Edmund Randolph, the nephew and adopted son of my dear friend Peyton Randolph, disturbed my temper as nothing had done since the misconduct of Lee at Monmouth. If in any instance I was swayed by personal and private feelings in the exercise of official patronage and power, it was in the case of

Mr. Randolph; and this fact added to the anger which his conduct excited.

I willingly turn from the remembrance of ingratitude, a sin that my soul abhors. It is a severe tax which all must occasionally pay who are called to eminent stations of trust, not only to be held up as conspicuous marks to the enmity of the public adversaries of their country, but to the malice of secret traitors, and the envious intrigues of false friends and factions. But all this is over. I willingly leave time and my country to pronounce the verdict of history.

As I wrote what just now I have set down, a remark of Mr. John Adams came into my mind. He said it was difficult for a man to write about himself without feeling that he was all the time in the presence of an audience. This may be true of Mr. Adams, but I am not aware that it is true of me.

The statement I shall now record of myself and for myself might be made very full as to events by the use of the details of my diaries, but this I desire to avoid. My intention is to deal chiefly with my own youthful life and the influences which affected it for good or for ill.

II

BEING without children to transmit my name, I have taken no great interest in learning much about my ancestors. I have, indeed, been too much concerned with larger matters. It is, however, far from my design to believe that heraldry, coat-armour, etc., might not be rendered conducive to public and private uses with us, or that they can have any tendency unfriendly to the purest spirit of republicanism; nor does it seem to me that pride in being come of gentry and of dutiful and upright men is without its value, if we draw from an honourable past nourishment to sustain us in continuing to be what our forefathers were. This also should make men who have children the more careful as to their own manner of life, and as for myself, although denied this great blessing, I may perhaps wisely have been destined to feel that all my countrymen were to me something more than my fellow-citizens.

I have heard my half-brother Lawrence say that he had learned from his elders that my English ancestors were violent Loyalists, especially one Sir Henry Washington, when the great struggle arose between the Parliament and the King in the time of the Commonwealth.

I recall that, when a young man, I was riding with my friend George Mason, and when this matter arose, and he asked me whether if I had lived in those days I should have been for the crown or the commons, I replied that if I had lived in that time I could have answered him, but that I was not enough informed concerning that period to be able to state on which side I should have been. Certainly I should have found it hard to make war on the King.

I profess myself to be ignorant as to much that concerns my ancestry. When too young to have the smallest interest in the matter, I heard my two half-brothers and William Fairfax conversing on the subject of the origin of my family. The brothers were not very clear as to our descent, but were of opinion that we came of the Washingtons of Sulgrave, originally of Lancashire. In 1791 the Garter king-at-arms, Sir

Isaac Heard, wrote to me, sending a pedigree of my family; but I had to confess it was a subject to which I had given very little attention; in fact, except as to our later history, I could only say that we came from Lancashire, Yorkshire, or some still more northerly county.

Most of the early colonists of all classes were too busy in fighting Indians and raising the means of living to concern themselves with the relatives left in England. This indifference was not uncommon among us, and was in those early days to be expected. It explains why we and other descendants of settlers knew, and indeed cared, too little about our ancestors.

I do not know what exactly was the station of the father of the brothers who first came over—John, my ancestor, and Lawrence, his brother. It is of more moment to me to know that my forefathers in this country have been gentlemen, and have in many positions of trust, both in civil employ and in the military line, served the colonies and, later, their country with faithfulness and honour.

As concerns the question of ancestry and a man's judging of himself by that alone,

I am much of Colonel Tilghman's opinion, who once said to me, speaking of Mr. B——, that when a man had to look back upon his ancestors to make himself sure he was a gentleman, he was but a poor sort of man, which I conceive to be true.

My great-grandfather, John Washington, the first emigrant of our name, was the son of Lawrence and Amphilis, his wife. He went first to the Barbados, but, not being pleased, came later to Virginia; that is, in 1657.

It is certain that my great-grandfather in some respects possessed qualities which resembled those which I myself possess. He was a man of great personal strength, inclined to war, very resolute, and of a masterful and very violent temper. He was accused in 1675 of too severe treatment of the Indians in the frontier wars against the Susquehannocks, for which he was reprimanded by Sir William Berkeley, but, it is said, unjustly. He was a man had in esteem and most respectable, and held a seat in the Assembly in 1670. He was also of a nature greatly moved by injustice, for on his voyage to Virginia a poor woman on board the ship was hanged for a witch, and he

made great efforts, on being come ashore, to have the master and crew punished. I find in myself the same anger at injustice.

It is proper to add that there was current in the colony a story that, on account of his rigour with the Indians, he was called by them Conocatorius, which, Englished, means a Destroyer of Villages. The Half-King, an Indian chief so called, hearing my name when first we met, addressed me by this title. There must have been among these tribes a remembrance or tradition as to the name, for certainly I never deserved it, and that after so long a time it should have been remembered appears to me strange.

My great-grandfather's brother Lawrence was engaged for a time in the mercantile way, and at one time signed himself as of Luton, County Bradford, merchant. He made some voyages to Virginia and home again before he settled in the colony, and may have acquired land in England, for, as I shall state later, he devised real estate in the home country.

As I speak of the home country, I am reminded that even after the War of Independency the habit of speaking of England

as home prevailed with many, so strong was the attachment to the mother country; and, indeed, nothing but the folly of Great Britain could have broken the bonds which united us.

My great-grandfather, John Washington, brought with him a wife from England. Her maiden name I do not know. She and her two children died within a few years of his landing. The brothers mention in their wills property in England, but where or exactly what it was they do not say. It would seem, therefore, that it was not poverty which drove my ancestor to emigrate. That this property was not mere money, the proceeds of tobacco, appears to be shown by the will of my great-grandfather's brother Lawrence, who devised to Mary, his daughter, his whole estate in England, real as well as personal.

My great-grandfather married secondly the widow of Walter Broadhurst, daughter of Nathaniel Pope of Appomattocks, gentleman. My grandfather Lawrence was the first born of this marriage. My great-grandfather died in 1677. He was of that importance as to have named for him the parish in which he resided. The brothers

were not the only ones of the name who came to Virginia. There was also a cousin, Martha Washington. She emigrated to Virginia and married Nicholas Hayward of Westmoreland. How it was that, being a spinster, she came over alone, I am not informed. She left her property to her cousins John and Lawrence, and a gold twenty-shilling piece to each, and to their sons each a feather bed and furniture, and to their heirs forever—which does appear to me long for a bed to last.

There were also others, but if related I have not felt concerned to inquire. They spelled the name Vysington in certain deeds, which I have heard was the ancient manner of spelling it. Of them I know nothing further. My great-grandfather left a legacy to the rector of the lower church of Washington parish, and ordered that a funeral sermon be preached, which appears to me, as Lord Fairfax said, to be a certain way to secure being well spoken of, at least once, after death. He also provided in his will for a tablet of the Ten Commandments, and also the king's arms, to be set up in the church of his parish.

He may have been led to come to Virginia by the fact that it had become for men loyal to the crown and to the Church of England a refuge such as the Puritans sought in Massachusetts. We have ever since been connected with that Church, nor have I found reason to depart from it. At times I have been a vestryman, but this was in those days also a civil office, having judicial duties, such as charge of the schools and of the poor of the parish.

My connection with the Church of my fathers has varied in interest from time to time, for, although I have at times partaken of the sacrament and even fasted, I have not always felt so inclined, although I have with reasonable punctuality attended upon the services. I have had all my life a disinclination to converse on this subject, and confess, as Dr. Franklin once remarked to me, that "silence is sometimes wisdom as concerns a man's creed."

In considering so much of my family history as is known to me, I perceive that men married at an early age and remained no long time widowers. Also I observe that many children died young, as was like

enough to happen on plantations remote from physicians, and indeed these were few in number and not as good as in the northern colonies.

I know less of my grandfather Lawrence than of his father. He did not increase the importance of the family, neither was he inclined to public business. He was, as I have understood, a quiet, thrifty man, and no seeker of adventure by land or water. He married Mildred Warner, by whom he had children, and died leaving a competent estate, but none to be compared with the great lands accumulated by the Byrds or Carters.

I conceive him to have been a person of moderate opinions concerning the Church of England, and as one who may have considered the dissenting sects as ill used. This I gather from a book given to me three years ago by a gentleman of Philadelphia, of the Society of Friends, who would have had me to believe that my grandfather was of that sect. This book is the life of one John Fothergill, a Quaker preacher, who says that in 1720 he "held a meeting at Mattocks, at Justice Washington's, a friendly man, where the Love of God opened my

heart toward the people, much to my comfort and their satisfaction.'' I do not suppose it to have meant more than that, as the church could not be used by a dissenter, Justice Washington willingly gave the good man the use of his own house.

III

MY father, Augustine, was born in 1694, on the plantation known as Wakefield, granted, in 1667, to his grandfather, and lying between Bridges' and Pope's creeks, in Westmoreland, on the north neck between the Potomac and the Rappahannock. My father, in his will, says: "Forasmuch as my several children in this my will mentioned, being by several Ventures, cannot inherit from one another," etc.

What he speaks of as his "Ventures" were his two marriages. A venture does appear to me to be an appropriate name for the uncertain state of matrimony. The first "venture" was Jane Butler, who lies buried at Wakefield. Of her four children two survived—that is, my half-brothers Lawrence and Augustine, whom we called Austin. I was the first child of my father's second "venture," and my mother was Mary Ball. I was born at Wakefield,[1] on

[1] This estate was bought by my father from his brother John.

February 11 [O. S.], 1732, about ten in the morning. I was baptized in the Pope's Creek church, and had two godfathers and one godmother, Mildred Gregory. Mr. Beverly Whiting and Mr. Christopher Brooks were my godfathers. I do not recall ever seeing Mr. Whiting, although his son, of the same name, I met in after years. Of Mr. Brooks I know nothing, nor do I know which one of the two gave me the silver cups which it was then the custom for the godfather to give to the godson. I still have them. I was told by a silversmith in Philadelphia that the cups are of Irish make, and of about 1720. There were six of these mugs, in order to be used for punch when the child grew up.

The Balls were respectable, and came out first as merchants. My maternal grandmother we know to have been Mary Johnson, of English birth, but of her family nothing more. At a later time the older planter families, both with us and in the West Indies, paid more attention to their ancestry, sometimes, it is to be feared, with pretensions which had no just foundation.

Many assumed arms to which they were not entitled, or, like Mr. J——n, commis-

sioned an agent in London to purchase some heraldic device, having Mr. Sterne's word for it that "a coat of arms may be purchased as cheap as any other coat."

I have had some reason to believe that our friends did not regard my mother's family, being in the mercantile line, as on the same social level as our own. But, in fact, we ourselves were not until a later day considered as of the highest class of Virginia gentry. Why this was I do not fully know. It is certain, however, that nowhere were aristocratic pretensions and the distinctions of social rank more marked than in Virginia. For a long time families like the Lees, Byrds, Carys, Masons, etc., regarded themselves as superior to other planter families, of as good or better blood.

The lines of social rank among us I judge to have been made early to depend on extent of landed property, so that the owners of these vast estates were like great nabobs, and by having seats and control in the governor's council and the House of Burgesses obtained large influence. They were at pains to defend their pretensions by a law of primogeniture, which made entails so

strict that they could not be broken, as in England, by agreement of father and son, but required to break them, in each case, an act of the Assembly. Families like our own were regarded rather as minor gentry, and were, for a time, owing in a measure to their having but moderate estates, looked down upon by certain of the great proprietors of enormous plantations and numberless slaves.

Whatever may have been the reason, or the reasons, I was more than once made to feel the fact that I was not looked upon as an equal by certain of these gentlemen, and this at an age when men are sensitive to such considerations.

My father, Augustine, has been described as a good planter and a man of energy. I apprehend that he was of a serious tendency, for Lawrence, my brother, once gave me to understand that most of the few books at Wakefield were religious; but whether this was so or not I do not know. Like some of the rest of us, my father had a high and quick temper, which, as he used to say, he had to keep muzzled. I remember being terrified at seeing him in a storm of anger because the clergyman who was to have bap-

tized my sister Mildred was too much in liquor to perform the ceremony.

About the year 1724 he became interested in the mining of iron ore with the Principio Company, in which the venturers were chiefly English. A furnace was opened on his estate in Stafford County. It was confiscated in 1780 as rebel property. He had a contract for hauling the ore from the mines, and later commanded a ship for the taking of iron to England and the fetching back of convict labourers. On this account, I apprehend, he was known as Captain Washington. He was, I have understood, a man of enterprising nature and better informed than most planters of his time.

He was educated at Appleby in England, near Whitehaven. I have often regretted that I never had his opportunities, or those of my brothers, in the way of education. The fact of my being a younger son and my father's death, and also my mother's overfondness, may have stood in the way, and on this and other occasions interfered with my own plans or with those of others for me.

I did not take after my mother in appearance, and I had the large frame and strength of my father. In other respects

also I was somewhat like him in my mind and character.

When in later years I returned to visit Wakefield I used to fancy I remembered it. This I could not have done, as I was only three years old when, because of the unhealthfulness of the place, my father moved away. The house was burned down on Christmas eve, 1779. It was of wood, with brick foundations, and had eight bedrooms. There was an underground dairy, a great garden with fig-trees and other fruit, and along the shores were wild flowering grapes and laurel and honeysuckle and sweetbrier roses, very fragrant in the spring season. Here in the middle of a great field lie my ancestors and some of the children of my father's first marriage.

In the year 1735 we moved, as I have said, fifty miles higher up the Potomac to the estate then known as Epsewasson or Hunting Creek. This was given, with other land, by the colony to my great-grandfather and Colonel Spencer for importing an hundred labourers, and was bought by my father in 1726 from my aunt Mildred Gregory, later my godmother. It came afterwards to be called Mount Vernon. It was at that time

in Prince William County, which my father represented in the House of Burgesses, as my brother did later. There we remained until 1739.

In this year our house took fire, as was supposed, by the act of one of our slaves, but never surely ascertained. We were then obliged to remove, and this time settled in Stafford, formerly St. George, on the east bank of the Rappahannock, opposite to Fredericksburg.

This residence was a two-story house on a rise of ground, with a fertile meadow sloping gently to the river. It was built of wood and painted red. There, as people well-to-do, we lived until my father's death, when the division of his estate did somewhat lessen the easiness of our lives; and of these latter years I can recall some more or less distinct remembrances, for here my education began.

IV

WHILE I was a child, my father, as I have said, made many voyages to England and fetched back with him convicts, and perhaps also indentured servants. Often in those days some of the unfortunate people thus sent to the colonies were under sentence for political offences, but many, of course, for crimes. One of these, a convict I was told, was my first schoolmaster. We called him Hobby, which was, I believe, a nickname; but he was named Grove, and was sexton of the Falmouth church, two miles away. Of what our sexton schoolmaster had been convicted I never heard, but of this I am assured, that my father would not have used as a schoolmaster a common thief. I used to ride the two miles to the "field-school," as they called it, in front of a slave named Peter, and later was allowed a pony, to my mother's alarm when he would tumble me off, as happened now

and then. Hobby was a short man, with one eye, and too good-humoured or too timid to be a good teacher, even of the a-b-c's and the little else we learned.

My father was kind to this man, and perhaps knew his history. He would even have allowed him the use of the rod, with the aid of which I might have profited more largely, for I am of his opinion that children should be strictly brought up. Hobby, being of a humourous turn, seems to me, as I remember him, to have resembled the grave-digger in the play of "Hamlet." He sometimes amused and at other times terrified us by tales of London or of his recent life as a sexton. He believed many of the negro superstitions—as that if a snake's head was cut off the tail would live until it thundered—and was much afraid of having what he called black magic put upon him by the negroes.

I did not learn much from Hobby and preferred to be out of doors. My father considered, I believe, that, as I was a younger son and must in some way support myself, I should be well trained in both mind and body, and had he lived the chance of the former might have been bettered.

The latter was often made difficult by my mother, who was unhappy when I was subject to the risks to which all lads of spirit are exposed. I remember that, when later my father was teaching me to leap my pony, the pony refused over and over, and this being near to the house, my mother ran out, and at last had a kind of hysterick turn. My father sat still on a big stallion and took no notice of her entreaties. At last I got the pony over, and he fell with me. I jumped up and was in the saddle in a moment. My father said that was ill ridden, I must try it again; and upon this my mother ran back to the house, crying out I would be murdered. But my father was this manner of man; he hated defeat, while my mother was ever desirous of keeping me out of danger, because it made her uncomfortable; and this was strange, for I have never been able to see that she was greatly pleased when I was successful, or was much moved by what the great Master allowed me to attain in later years.

My elder brothers, Lawrence and Augustine, were both at different times sent to England for education at Appleby School, near Whitehaven, when I was a child. Law-

rence had the family liking for enterprises and martial employment. I was eight years old, and he of age, when Lawrence served with Admiral Vernon and General Wentworth in the disastrous attack on Cartagena. I remember as a boy the interest this expedition caused in our neighbourhood. It was said that Harry Beverley and other Virginians captured by the Spaniards had been made to work as slaves, and this stirred up much feeling among us. The ex-Governor Spottiswood, although an aged man, would have gone as a major-general, but died suddenly at Temple Farm, near Yorktown, where forty-two years later Lord Cornwallis met me to sign the capitulations.

Lawrence was away two years. The letters wrote by him to my father were full of interest, and, as I remember, were the means of arousing in me, who was but a little lad, the liking for warfare, of which we all had a share.

I can remember how, as we sat about the hearth at evening, my father read aloud to us these letters, and explained to me the military terms used, and why, for want of foresight, the gallantry of soldiers and sail-

ors served only to give opportunity for loss of life. This was especially in connection with the last letter we received, after the dismal failure of the attack on Cartagena. He wrote:

HONOURED AND DEAR FATHER: What with dissensions between the General Wentworth and Admiral Vernon, who was, as we think, not to blame, we have come away, leaving the Spaniards to crow, and our Colonel Gooch ill at Jamaica. When I am to have another dose of glory I pray to have better doctors.

We were to storm Fort *Lazaro*—which must mean Lazarus—at night. But we were too long getting there, or the guides treacherous, and the ladders too short and no sufficient breach. This *Lazarus* fort was too much alive, but we were actually on the rampart when Colonel Grant was killed, and we were driven back in sad confusion, and half of us, a good thousand, killed or wounded for want of forethought. I came off with no more hurt than to be so spent that I had no breath to curse the folly for which so many brave men died. The climate was worse than the dons, and we took ship with our tails between our legs and some two thousand shaking with agues and racked with fever.

When I heard this I jumped up and said I wished I could have been there, upon

which my father laughed and said I was better off where I was, and my mother that I had better go to bed.

I was at that age when lads of spirit are apt to ask questions, and concerning these my father was always patient, and encouraged a reasonable curiosity; but, on the other hand, my mother disliked this habit of curiosity, and when my father talked of Indian wars and of my brother's fine conduct at Cartagena she was sure to say I should never go to war. My father would reply that it was sometimes the business and also the duty of a gentleman, and then there was no greater pleasure than to hear over and over how Sir Henry Washington, said to be of our family, defended Worcester in the civil war in England.

In those days all the world was at war, and with us there was always the dread of Indian outbreaks. It was no wonder that I and other little fellows at Hobby's school played at soldiering. A lad named William Bustle, a fat, sturdy boy, was commander of the Indians, and in the woods we imitated the red men and the frontier farmers, and passed from tree to tree throwing stones, or, in winter, snowballs, with mock

scalping and much pulling of hair, which was worn long. This was interfered with one winter because Bustle hit me in the eye with a snowball in which was a stone, a thing not considered fair. My mother wished Bustle punished. My father said I must take care of my own quarrels, and this I did, for, being then ten years old, and very strong, as soon as I went back to school I gave Bustle a good beating. In fact, I was of unusual strength, and because of my violence of temper felt no hurt, and would not listen when Bustle called, "Enough." My mother's uncertain discipline and her too affectionate weakness did me great harm. For if my father punished me on account of disobedience or outbursts of temper, my mother was sure to interfere, or to coddle and pity me, a thing I greatly disliked. I never learned much self-control until a later day, which, in its place, I shall call to mind.

My sister Betty, who afterwards married Fielding Lewis, was, next to my half-brother Lawrence and my brother Jack, most dear to me. Samuel had some of the weaknesses of my mother, and Charles, in later days, some worse ones of his own. In after life

Samuel was often in debt, and was married five times, being extravagant in this as in all other ways. Mildred was sadly affected from birth and died young. It was unfortunate for me that while I was a child my half-brothers were sent from home and put in charge of the plantations of Wakefield and of Mount Vernon, which had been rebuilt and given the name of the admiral whom Lawrence much admired.

V

IN 1742 Lawrence came from Cartagena, and meant to continue in the service, but, after our sudden way, he fell in love with Anne, the daughter of William Fairfax of Belvoir, our neighbour, the cousin and agent of my lord of that name, and this, luckily for my own character, ended his desire for a military life. I too well recall the event which delayed his marriage. I was at this time, April 17, 1743, being eleven years old, on a visit to my cousins at Choptank, some thirty miles away. We were very merry at supper, when Peter, who was supposed to look after me, arrived with the news of my father's sudden illness. It was the first of my too many experiences of the ravage time brings to all men. I heard the news with a kind of awe, but without realizing how serious in many ways was this summons. I rode home behind Peter, and found my mother in a state of distrac-

tion. She led me to the bedside of my father, crying out, "He is dying." The children were around him, and he was groaning in great pain; but he kissed us in turn, and said to me, "Be good to your mother." I may say that throughout her life I have kept the promise I made him as I knelt, crying, at his bedside. He died that night, and I lost my best friend.

My mother for a month talked of him incessantly, and after that very little, except to say, "If your father were alive I should be more considered." I do not know why I, too, was averse to speaking of him, and yet I loved him above all people. But concerning such matters children are puzzled, and unable to express themselves, nor have I ever been other than shy in saying what I feel in the way of affection, whereas on paper I do not suffer this shyness, nor feel the reserve which occasioned Colonel Trumbull to say to me once that I was often unjustly regarded as cold because of my difficulty of being outspoken concerning my regard for those dear to me. I am little better of it to-day.

My father had much land and little money. As was usual in Virginia, he left to

his elder sons the larger share. To Lawrence he gave his interest in the iron-works, with Mount Vernon and two thousand five hundred acres, also the resident slaves and the mill, and, in case of his failure to leave a child lawfully begotten or such child dying under age, this property was "to go to and remain" to me. To Augustine he left Wakefield; to me his farm on the Rappahannock and one moiety of his land on Deep Run, with ten negro slaves. Samuel, John, and Charles were also given land and slaves, and Betty four hundred pounds.

My mother was to have my estate for her use until I was of age, and with whatever else was left her, and her own sixteen hundred acres, might have sufficed with economy; but that virtue she found difficult to practise, and was never a prudent or managing woman. She soon felt her children to be a heavy burden upon an estate which was none too large, and complained, as was common for her to do all her life, that she was poor, and this even when I was assured that she was comfortably cared for. I never knew a more affectionate mother. She was said to have been foolishly fond of her children, and I

was more than once brought to feel that her love of us did interfere with good judgment. Certainly whatever were her opinions,—and we did not often agree,—these differences never lessened my love for her, as differences often do. As she grew old her peculiarities were more and more notable. With very many good qualities, she was hard to satisfy, and this did not cease until the end of her life, for she could not be restrained from borrowing money and accepting gifts from those who were not her relations. Indeed, I once had to write her that while I had a shilling left she should never want, but that I must not be viewed as a delinquent, or be considered by the world as unjust and an undutiful son. But so was she made, and even her doctor, Thornton, wrote to me in her last illness, in which his cousin, Dr. Rush, was also consulted, that he "had every day a small battle with her."

VI

MY father died in April, 1743, and Lawrence was married to Miss Fairfax in June of that year. It was fortunate for me that my brother's wife, Anne Fairfax, soon shared the constant affection felt for me by her husband Lawrence.

Austin, as we usually called Augustine, also embarked into the matrimonial state as the husband of Anne Aylett of Westmoreland, who brought him a large property.

The next three years of my young life were important. I learned very soon from my mother that, when of age, I would have a moderate estate and insufficient. It is a happy thing that children have no power to realize what money means to their elders, else I might have been set against Lawrence and thought my father unjust. As I did not understand my mother's complaints of poverty, they had no effect upon

me. After my father's death, and in the absence of my elder brothers, the house and farm soon showed the want of a man's care, and we lads enjoyed at this time almost unlimited freedom. My older brothers saw it, and felt that I, at least, might suffer, being of an age and nature to need discipline and to be guided. In fact, I delighted to skip away from my man Peter, and find indulgence in roasting ears of Indian corn in the forbidden cabins of the field-slaves, or in coon-hunts at night, when all the house was asleep. When my pranks were discovered my mother was sometimes too severe in her punishments, or else only laughed.

Nothing was assured or certain in the house, now that the hand of wise and strong government was gone.

We were taught the catechism as a preparation for Sundays, and my mother read the Bishop of Exeter's sermons or Matthew Hale's "Commentaries, Moral and Divine." I still have this book. It belonged originally to my father's first wife, Jane Butler, and below her name my mother wrote her own, "Mary Ball." At this time she was much given to Puritanical views, which

were beginning to be felt in Virginia, owing largely to the want of better clergymen in the Established Church. She would have the servants up late on Saturday to cook, that there might be no labour on Sunday. In consequence, the blacks fell asleep in church. My mother would then get up in mid-service, and go where they sat, and poke them awake with her fan.

At this period my great personal strength and endurance were constant temptations to forbidden enterprises on land or water, and it was at this time of my life that I discovered a certain pleasure in danger. I find it difficult, not having the philosophical turn of mind, to describe what I mean; but of this I became aware as time went on, that, in battle or other risks, I was suddenly the master of larger competence of mind and body than I possessed at other times.

When, on one occasion, the learned Dr. Franklin desired to be excused if he asked whether in battle I had ever felt fear, I had to confess that in contemplating danger I was like most men, but that immediate peril had upon me the influence which liquor has upon some, making them feel able for anything. He said yes, but as to the influ-

ence of drink, that was a mere delusion; whereas he understood, and here he begged to apologize, that, in great danger in battle and when the ranks were breaking, I had seemed to possess powers of decision and swift judgment beyond those I could ordinarily command. I said it was true, that danger seemed to lift me in mind and body above my common level, and that it was the satisfaction this gave which made danger agreeable; not, be it said, the peril, but the results.

I apprehend him to have been correct, for in battle I have often felt this, as at Monmouth, at Princeton, and elsewhere. In general, my mind acts slowly, and I have been often painfully aware of it when in council with General Hamilton, Mr. Jefferson, or General Knox. General Wayne was fortunate in this quickening of the mind in danger. He once said to Colonel Humphreys of my staff that he disliked danger, but liked its effects upon himself when it came.

Certainly I had my share of risks at the time I now speak of. No one controlled my actions, and old Peter, in whom my father had greatly trusted, now allowed me,

in general, to do as pleased me. The river and the forests afforded game, but the riding of half-broken horses was what most I liked. My joy in the horse and his ways was the mere satisfaction in conquest and in the training of a strong brute; but it made me a good horseman, and helped, though I knew it not then, to prepare me for the years when I was to be so much in the saddle.

We had at this time a slave named Sampson, who possessed great control over animals. He was old in our service, and very black. He was said to be a Mandingo negro, and to do very well if kindly treated. The blacks of this tribe incline to take their own lives if what they feel to be disgrace falls upon them, and this man, for whom my father had a great liking, never had been whipped. He had charge, under the overseer, of the stables, the brood-mares, and the training of horses for saddle or harness.

I was at this time more about the stables than was allowed under my father's rule, and did, in fact, much as I liked out of school hours. It so happened that once, on a Saturday, there being no school, I was very early at the stables, and, as there was no one to hinder, made the groom

saddle a hunter we had. On this I made my appearance at a meet for fox-hunting, four miles from home, to the great amusement of the gentry. They asked me if I could stay on, and if the horse knew he had any one on his back. However, the big sorrel carried me well, and knew his business better than I did. I saw two foxes killed, and this was my first hunt; but as I rode home my horse went lame, and, to save him, I dismounted and led him. Towards noon, when we were come to the farm stable, I found the overseer, with a whip in his hand, swearing at Sampson, and making as if about to beat him. I ran up behind them and snatched away the whip. The overseer turned and, seeing me, said he meant to punish Sampson for letting me take a horse which was sold to go to Williamsburg. When he knew the horse was lame, he was still more angry; but I declared I was to blame, and no one else, and said he should first whip me. He said no more, except that my mother would say what was to be done. I think he made no report of me, and certainly my mother said nothing. When the overseer had walked away, the old servant thanked me, and said no one had ever struck him, and that it would be his death. This

seemed strange to me, a boy, for the slaves were whipped like children, and thought as little of it. Sampson said to me that I was like my father, that when I was angry I became red and then pale, and that I must never get angry with a horse.

After this interference Sampson took great pains with me and taught me many useful things about horses. Although I became a good horseman, I never had his strange gift of managing dogs or other creatures. Indeed, he was the only black man I ever saw who could handle bees, for these industrious little insects have a great enmity to negroes.

All this happened in October, 1743, and was the means of making a useful change in my life and ways. At about this time my two brothers came together to visit us, in order to satisfy my mother's complaints that she was never so poor and, since my father died, was not ever considered. It seems that at this time she was, as she remained until death, a dissatisfied woman, although never without sufficient income. She was, I fear, born discontented, and could not help it; for happiness depends more on the internal frame of a person's mind than on the externals in this world.

VII

WHILE matters concerning the estate were being discussed, Lawrence soon discovered so much of my too great freedom that he and my half-brother Augustine insisted that I go to live for a time with the latter, near to whose abode was a good school. My mother wept and protested, but at last agreed, with impatience, that I might go if I wished to do so. Of this Lawrence felt secure, for he had promised me a horse for myself and clothes to come from London, especially a red coat. I have always had a fancy for being well clothed; and as I was less well dressed than other gentlemen's sons, the idea of a scarlet coat, and the promise of spurs when I had learned to ride better, settled my mind. I liked very well the great liberty I had, and to part with this and my playfellows I was not inclined; but I felt, as a boy does, that I was being made of importance, which pleases mankind at all

times of life. I may say, also, that I was become more grave than most of my years, and was curious to see Williamsburg, where lived the king's governor, and something beyond our plantation.

I remember that George Fairfax insisted once that no action ever grew out of only one motive, and, as I see, there were several made me willing to leave my home. Thus when Lawrence talked to me of his wars, and of his friends the Fairfaxes, and of how I must also soon visit him at Mount Vernon, I readily agreed to his wishes. It was hard to part with Betty, who looked like me until I had the smallpox, and with my dear brother Jack; but I was eager, as the day came, to see the outside world, and I rode away very content, on a gray mare with one black fore foot, beside Augustine, and my man Peter after us.

It was a long ride across the neck and down to Pope's Creek on the Potomac, and I was a tired lad when we rode at evening up to the door of the house of Wakefield, where I was born eleven years before.

Here began a new life for me. Anne Aylett, Mrs. Augustine Washington, was a kind woman, very orderly in her ways, and

handsome. After two days Peter was sent home, and I was allowed to ride alone to a Mr. Williams's school at Oak Grove, four miles away.

I took very easily to arithmetic, and, later, to mathematic studies. I remember with what pleasure and pride I accompanied Mr. Williams when he went to survey some meadows on Bridges' Creek. To discover that what could be learned at school might be turned to use in setting out the bounds of land, gave me the utmost satisfaction. I have always had this predilection for such knowledge as can be put to practical uses, and was never weary of tramping after my teacher, which much surprised my sister-in-law. I took less readily to geography and history. Some effort was made (but this was later) to instruct me in the rudiments of Latin, but it was not kept up, and a phrase or two I found wrote later in a copy-book is all that remains to me of that tongue.

I much regret that I never learned to spell very well or to write English with elegance. As the years went by, I improved as to both defects, through incessant care on my part and copying my letters over

and over. Great skill in the use of language I have never possessed, but I have always been able to make my meaning so plain in what I wrote that no one could fail to understand what I desired to make known.

I have always been willing to confess my lack of early education, but notwithstanding have been better able to present my reasons on paper than by word of mouth. I am aware, as I have said, that, except in the chase or in battle, my mind moves slowly, but I am further satisfied that under peaceful circumstances my final capacity to judge and act is quite as good as that of men who, like General Hamilton, were my superiours in power to express themselves. I may add that I learned early to write a clear and very legible hand. As to spelling, my mother's was the worst I ever saw, and I believe King George was no better at it than I, his namesake. This just now reminds me that I may have been named after his grandfather, King George II, for George was not a family name, and, as we were very loyal people, it may have been so.

It was usual in those days to give to children names long in use in a family. John, Augustine, and Lawrence, for males,

were repeated among us, and Mildred and Harriott; but I never heard of a George Washington before me, nor of any George in our descent, except my grandmother's grandfather, the Hon. George Reade of his Majesty's council in 1657. General Hamilton at one time interested himself in this matter, but I could make no satisfactory answer. I suppose my mother knew. I never thought to ask her. General Hamilton made merry over the idea of how much it would have gratified his present Majesty to have known of his grandfather being thus honoured.

Indeed, it pleased Mr. Duane, when maligning me, to call me Georgius Rex, but of this I apprehend that I have said enough. It is of no importance.

Outside of my school, the life at Wakefield was well suited to a lad of spirit. There were thirty horses in the stables, and some of them well bred and had won races at Williamsburg.

The waters of Pope's Creek, where the Potomac tides rush in at flood and out at ebb through a narrow outlet of the creek, were full of crabs, oysters, clams, and fish. One of the slaves, named Appleby after

August's school, was engaged in the supply of fish, which the many negroes and the family needed. I think there were, at the least, seventy blacks. Being permitted to go on the water with Appleby, I found much satisfaction in sailing and rowing and the search for shell-fish. My brother August once surprised me by saying that some day the bottom of the Bay of Chesapeake would be a richer mine, on account of the oysters, than my brother Lawrence's iron-mines, by which we all set great store. This may some day come to pass. The quantities of shad took in April and May were enough to feed an army, and what we did not eat went to feed the land.

In the autumn I was sometimes allowed to sit with August in a wattled blind, behind brush, while at dawning of day he shot the ducks, geese, and swans which flew over the little islands of Pope's Creek in great flocks.

I prospered in this hardy life and grew strong and able to endure, nor was it less good for me in other ways; for, although I cared very little for August's fiddling, nor to hear Anne sing, nor for the books, of which there was a fair supply, I admired

August so much that I began, as some lads will do, to imitate his ways of doing things. And this was of use to me, for August was very courteous and mild-spoken to people of all classes, and much beloved by his slaves, to whom he was a gentle and considerate master.

The country along the Potomac was well settled with families of gentry, and visits were made by rowboats, so that I found very soon boy companions, although Belvoir, where the Fairfaxes lived, and Mount Vernon, rebuilt in 1742, being remote, were less frequently visited.

The church at Oak Grove was the better attended, and few persons were presented or admonished for non-attendance, because on Sunday, as many drove long distances, provisions were brought, and in the oak grove near by, between services, there was a kind of picnic, very pleasant to the younger people.

VIII

SOON after going to live for a season at Wakefield with Augustine, I began to take myself more seriously than is common in boys of my age. I believe I have all my life been regarded as grave and reserved, although, in fact, a part of this was due to a certain shyness, which I never entirely overcame, and of which I have already written. My new schoolmaster, Mr. Williams, gave me a book which I still have, and which here, and later at Mount Vernon, was of use to me. It was called the "Youth's Companion." It contained receipts, directions for conduct and manners, how to write letters, and, what most pleased me, methods of surveying land by Gunter's rule, and all manner of problems in arithmetic and mathematics, as well as methods of writing deeds and conveyances. Young as I was, it suited well the practical side of my nature; for how to do things, and the

doing of them so as to reach practical results, have never ceased to please me.

My mother's natural desire for my presence wore out the patience of Augustine, and I was at last, after some months (but I do not remember exactly how long), sent back to her and to a school kept by the Rev. James Marye, a gentleman of Huguenot descent, at Fredericksburg, and from whom I might have learned French. My father had been desirous, I know not why, that I should learn that language; but this I never did, to my regret. I should have been saved some calumny, as I shall mention, and later also inconvenience, when I had to deal with French officers during the great war. I had then to make use of Mr. Duponceau and of Lieutenant-Colonel Hugh Wynne of my staff, but had been better served by G. W. had I known the French tongue.

I was at this time about fourteen, and was, as I said, a rather grave lad. I was industrious as to what I liked, but fond of horses and the chase, and was big of my years, masterful, and of more than common bodily strength.

I was not more unfortunate than most

other young Virginians in regard to education. Governor Spottiswood, as I have heard, found no members of the majority in the House who could spell correctly or write so as to state clearly their grievances. There were persons, like the late Colonel Byrd, who were exceptions, but these were usually such as had been abroad. Patrick Henry, long after this time, observed to my sister that, even if we Virginians had little education, Mother Wit was better than Mother Country, for the gentlemen who came back brought home more vices than virtues. In fact, this may have been my father's opinion; for, although he sent Lawrence and Augustine to the Appleby School in England, he would not allow of any long residence in London, where, he said, "men's manners are finished, but so, too, are their virtues."

For a few months in the next year I spent about half of the time with my mother. While there I studied, as before, at the school kept by the Rev. Mr. Marye. The rest of the time was spent in the company of Lawrence and his lady at Mount Vernon.

Lawrence was a tall man, narrow-chested, and less vigorous than Augustine. He was,

however, fond of the chase and fox-hunting, and had books in larger number than was usual among planters. I remember him as very pleasing in his ways, and possessed of a certain reserve and gravity of demeanour, which, as my sister Betty Lewis remarked, made his rare expressions of affection more valuable.

He seemed to me the finest gentleman I ever knew, and I took to imitating him as my model, as I had done Augustine, which was at times matter for mirth to Anne, his wife. No doubt it seemed ridiculous, but it was, I do believe, of use to me.

As I write, I recall with unceasing gratitude the great debt I owe to my brother's care of me at this period of my life. I was encouraged when I was at Mount Vernon—as I was then for a time away from school—to keep up my studies, and I remember that I fell again with satisfaction upon the manual I just now spoke of. It is still in my possession, and my wife's children once made themselves uncommon merry over the ill-made pictures I drew on the blank pages; but it was of use to me as no other book ever was.

I was early made to understand that I

must do something to support myself. The few acres on the river Rappahannock were not to be mine until I became of age, and until then were my mother's; indeed, I never took them from her. My brother disapproved of the easy, loose life of the younger sons of planters, and, of course, trade was not to be considered, nor to work as a clerk; and yet, without care, accuracy, and such business capacity as is needed by merchants, no man can hope to be successful, either as a planter or even in warfare.

Ever since I had been at Mr. Williams's school, I had a liking for the surveying of land, and had later been allowed to further inform myself by attending upon Mr. Genn, the official surveyor of Westmoreland, a man very honest and most accurate. Indeed, I had so well learned this business that I became, to my great joy, of use to Lawrence and some of his neighbours, especially to William Fairfax, who had at first much doubt as to how far my skill might be trusted.

Meanwhile various occupations for me were considered and discussed by my elders. The sea was less favoured in Virginia than at the North; but many captains of mer-

chant ships were in those days, like my father, of the better class, and my brothers, who saw in me no great promise, believed that if I went to sea as a sailor I might be helped in time to a ship, and have my share in the prosperous London trade.

Like many boys, I inclined to this life. I remind myself of it here because it has been said that I was intended at this time to serve the king as a midshipman, which was never the case. Meanwhile,—for this was an affair long talked about,—my mother's brother, Joseph Ball, wrote to her from London, May 19, 1746, that the sea was a dog's life, and, unless a lad had great influence, was a poor affair, and the navy no better. Upon this my mother wrote, offering various trifling objections, and at last hurried to Mount Vernon, and so prevailed by her tears that my small chest was brought back to land from a ship in the river.

My brother Lawrence comforted me in my disappointment, saying there were many roads in life, and that only one had been barred. I remember that I burst into tears, when once I was alone, and rushed off to the stables and got a horse, and rode away

at a great pace. This has always done me good, and, somehow, settled my mind; for I have never felt, as I believe a Latin writer said, that care sits behind a horseman. I jolted mine off, but for days would not have any one talk to me of the matter. Even as a lad, I had unwillingness to recur to a thing when once it was concluded, and that is so to this day.

IX

THE summer passed away in sport and in visits to William Fairfax, who lived below us on the river. Here I saw much good society, among others the Masons, Carys, and Lees, and formed an attachment to William Fairfax, the master of Belvoir, and his son George, which was never broken, although we came long after to differ in regard to our political views. But of this, and of his cousin, Lord Fairfax, more hereafter. In the fall of this year I returned to my mother, or rather, as before, I went to board across the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, in the house of a widow of the name of Stevenson, which she pronounced Stinson. She had, by her two marriages, six sons, two of them Crawfords and four Stevensons. They were all well-grown fellows, and of great strength and bigness.

I am reminded, as I set down in a random way what interests me, that, as I expected, this act of attention brings to mind

some things which I seemed to have altogether forgotten. Among them is this, that, just before returning to my school, I went with Lawrence to pay my respects to Lord Fairfax, who was come for a visit to his cousin at Belvoir. We found the family, however, in sudden distress at the news, just arrived, of the death in battle of Thomas, the second son, who was killed in the Indies, in an engagement on board his Majesty's ship *Harwich*. We made, on this account, but a short stay. I remember that, as we rode away, Lawrence said to me: "A great preacher called Jeremy Taylor wrote a sermon about death, and gave a long list of the many ways of dying. Which way, George, would you wish to die?" I said I did not wish to die at all.

Lawrence said: "But you will die some day. What way would you choose?" I said I thought to die in battle would be best, and I said this because I remembered with horror watching how my father died and how greatly he suffered.

Lawrence said: "The good preacher did not speak of that way to die." Now, as I write, being in years, it seems that not in that way shall I die, nor does it matter.

After this I went back to my mother, or rather to the town of Fredericksburg. I liked it the more because Colonel Harry Willis lived there. He married first my aunt Mildred, and second my cousin Mildred, so that I had about me many cousins, with also Warners and Thorntons of my kindred.

I was here fortunate in my teacher, of whom I have spoken before. This gentleman, the Rev. James Marye, was very different in his ways from some of the clergy put upon us by the Bishop of London, hard-drinking, ill-mannered men. Mr. Marye was got for St. George's parish, on a petition of the vestry to Governor Gooch. He was rector thirty years, and was succeeded by his son.

On Sunday, as was quite common in Virginia, the girls and boys were heard the catechism by the rector, and those who did well were rewarded from time to time—the girls with pincushions and the boys with trap-balls.

The sons of the widow in whose house I lodged during the week were, as I have said, rough, big fellows who damaged a great deal the pride I had in my strength,

because among them, for the first time as concerned lads of near my years, I met my match in wrestling and jumping, and what we called the Indian hug. Almost all of them served under me in the war, and one, William Crawford, rose to be a colonel and perished miserably, being burned at Sandusky in the war with the Indians, after their cruel way.

The Rev. Mr. Marye concerned himself more than the ordinary schoolmaster with the manners of his scholars. I may have been inclined beyond most lads to value his rules of courtesy and decent behaviour, for I kept the book in which I was made to copy the one hundred and eighteen precepts he taught us. I conceive them to have been of service to me and to others. I find the mice have gnawed and eaten a part of these rules. When, of late, I showed them to my sister Betty, she said she hoped eating of them would make the mice polite, for she was dreadfully afraid of those little vermin.

In this manner my next two years passed by. During this time I became still further attracted by the exactness and interest of the surveying of land, which I carried on without present thought of gain. I used to

ride into the woods, and, leaving my horse tied, make use of Peter as a chain-bearer. Sometimes my cousins went with me, especially Lewis Willis, my schoolmate. But they soon grew tired and went to bird-nesting, or digging up of woodchucks, or to making the "praying-mantis" bugs fight one another. I never had much inclination towards games which had no distinct or lasting result. At any time I preferred for my play to fish or shoot, when allowed, or to measure lands and plot them.

Any work demanding strict method is good for a lad, and I found in surveys an education of value and one suited to my tastes, which never very much inclined to discover happiness in constant intercourse with my fellow-men, nor in much reading of books.

X

AT the age of fifteen, in the fall of 1747, I went once more, for a time, to reside with Lawrence at Mount Vernon, where it was to be finally determined what I should do for a livelihood. As I look back on this period of my life, I perceive that it was the occasion of many changes. I saw much more of George William Fairfax and George Mason, ever since my friends, and was often with George's father, the master of Belvoir, only four miles from Mount Vernon.

There came often, for long visits, William's cousin, Lord Fairfax, over whose great estates in the valley William was the agent. I learned later that when first his lordship saw me he pronounced me to be a too sober little prig—and this, no doubt, I was; but after a time, when he came to overcome my shyness, he began to show such interest in me as flattered my pride

and pleased my brother Lawrence. At this period Lord Fairfax was a tall man and gaunt, very ruddy and near-sighted.

It was natural that as a lad I should be pleased by the notice this gentleman, the only nobleman I had ever seen, began to take of me. My fondness for surveying he took more seriously than did my own people, and told me once it was a noble business, because it had to be truthful, and because it kept a man away from men and, especially, from women. I did not then understand what he meant, and did not think it proper to inquire.

I owed to this gentleman opportunities which led on to others, and to no one else have I been more indebted. I trust and believe that I let go no chance in after life to serve this admirable family.

True friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity before it is entitled to the appellation. In fact, much disaster has befallen these friends, from whom politics and distance have separated me without weakening my gratitude or affection.

It has often happened to me to learn that I am thought to be a cold man, but this I

believe to be untrue; for though I am, as concerns social intercourse and freedom of speech, a man reserved by nature, I discover in myself a great freedom to express myself affectionately on paper—nor do I conceive that I am unlike others in feeling the loss of the many friends whom distance or death has separated from me. But I will not repine; I have had my day.

As my brother was aware of the advantage it might be to me to secure the good will of the Fairfaxes, I was encouraged to visit Belvoir often, and thus was given me the chance to be, when he chose, in the company of his lordship, who was at this time a frequent guest at Belvoir with his cousins, and now and then at Mount Vernon.

The company of these gentlemen was of much value to me, and in all ways useful. William Fairfax was a man of honour and great probity; also very courteous. He had seen service in both Indies, and had divers adventures in clearing the pirates out of New Providence, all of which I was delighted to hear of, and he to relate. He had lived as a collector of customs in the New England colonies, having taken a wife at Salem, and had a greater respect

for them than was common in Virginia. Indeed, in those days our planters despised the men of the North as mere traders and Puritans, while they, in their turn, considered us godless, drunken, fox-hunting squires, out of which prejudices arose, during the great war, many jealousies and troubles, of which, God knows, there were enough without these.

At this time I was old enough to take an interest in what my elders said of the politics of the colonies. I was more and more surprised to hear how lightly they regarded the governor. I listened also to their complaints of the too frequent interference in affairs of which we knew much, and the advisers of the crown in England very little. They complained that enterprise was crippled on sea and land, and considered smuggling a just way to escape some of the grievous duties laid between the colonies. They felt it unjust that we must use none but British ships on the ocean, and be cut off from the natural channels of commerce, etc. I listened eagerly and wondered, as a boy would, why these great gentlemen, who seemed to me so powerful, should submit to such wrongs. They

spoke also with anger of the way in which the colonies were being loaded with thieves and women of the worst class, sent out as convicts. Of the political convicts they spoke with pity, as indeed they might, for some of these were gentlemen of good families, and in later times, being freed, prospered in honourable conditions of life.

There were some singular matters combined with the condition of indentured servitude. Especially was I one day astonished to learn that at one time, but earlier than this, if the white master of an indentured man was fined and could not pay, the debt might be satisfied by the whipping of one of these bad or unfortunate servants.

Both Fairfaxes spoke with more freedom of the king than did my brothers. Perhaps they inherited some of the liberty of thought which made the famous earl of their name a rebel to the crown in the time of the Commonwealth; and yet, when, at a later day, we had even greater cause to rebel, they were, to my sorrow, loyal Tories.

I was not without younger friends, for to Belvoir came the Carlyles, cousins of the Fairfaxes from Alexandria, my own cousin Lawrence, with my dear cousin Robin

Washington of Choptank, and many more, such as the Carys, Mrs. Fairfax's kindred, the Masons, and my sister Betty, a great favourite. But of all these people, the Lord Fairfax most affected my life, and indirectly prepared me for the career of a frontier officer. At this time he was fifty-nine years old. Although a heavy man, he was a fine horseman; and as I never was tired of the saddle, we were much engaged in the hunting of wild foxes, or, lacking these, of foxes bagged by the negroes and let loose for the sport. He was a man who disliked women, and avoided society, or was inclined to be silent in company; but with me he was a most lively companion, and would tell me of Oxford, and of having written papers in the "Spectator," which I had then begun to read. My sister Betty was inclined to be merry over his lordship's fancy to have me ride and hunt with him, saying that as I never talked except to answer questions, and his lordship talked only once a week, we were well matched. My brother Lawrence considered her wanting in respect, and that his lordship might be of much service to me. I could talk when occasion served, but I had been taught that it was

for my elders to choose whether I should talk or not. There were times when his lordship was pleased to encourage me in the asking of questions, and at other times liked to puzzle me with matters beyond my years.

XI

IN this pleasant company of William Fairfax and his wife, and my friend George William, his son, I saw with profit something of the ways and manners of persons of consideration, and, being by nature observant, profited accordingly. Indeed, the Lord Fairfax more than once commended the matter to my attention, saying that good and fitting manners to men of all classes would often obtain what could not be otherwise as easily had. I do not now recall the phrase he used, but, if I recollect, it was out of a letter written to Sir Philip Sidney by his father.

I find it curious to recall how at this time I appeared to others, and, concerning this, I have found a letter addressed by Lord Fairfax to my mother. In one of her sudden and often brief ambitions for me, she desired to know of his lordship

whether it would not be well for me, like Mr. C—— and Colonel H——, to go to Oxford. When riding with the old gentleman the next day, he told me of her wish. I was surprised, but even then I knew she would, at the last minute, change her mind, and I said as much, with due respect. For a time he rode on in silence, and at last said: "Young man, this is your country; stay here. What do you want to do?" I said boldly I should like to be a surveyor and help in the settling and surveying of his lordship's lands in the valley. He said I was young to contend among hostile squatters, but he would talk with Lawrence of it. I heard no more of Oxford, and this is the answer he made my mother. It seems to me as I read this letter, after the lapse of forty-nine years, that what his lordship wrote was very near to the truth; nevertheless, it greatly displeased my mother. But she was always displeased with any one who did not agree with her, which, indeed, was hard to do, as sister Betty Lewis once said, because, whenever for peace you were on her side, you found that she had changed to the opposite opinion.

He wrote:

Belvoir.

HONOURED MADAM: You are so good as to ask what I think of a temporary residence for your son George in England. It is a country for which I myself have no inclination, and the gentlemen you mention are certainly renowned gamblers and rakes, which I should be sorry your son were exposed to, even if his means easily admitted of a residence in England. He is strong and hardy, and as good a master of a horse as any could desire. His education might have been bettered, but what he has is accurate and inclines him to much life out of doors. He is very grave for one of his age, and reserved in his intercourse; not a great talker at any time. His mind appears to me to act slowly, but, on the whole, to reach just conclusions, and he has an ardent wish to see the right of questions—what my friend Mr. Addison was pleased to call "the intellectual conscience." Method and exactness seem to be natural to George. He is, I suspect, beginning to feel the sap rising, being in the spring of life, and is getting ready to be the prey of your sex, wherefore may the Lord help him, and deliver him from the nets those spiders, called women, will cast for his ruin. I presume him to be truthful because he is exact. I wish I could say that he governs his temper. He is subject to attacks of anger on provocation, and sometimes without just cause;

but as he is a reasonable person, time will cure him of this vice of nature, and in fact he is, in my judgment, a man who will go to school all his life and profit thereby.

I hope, madam, that you will find pleasure in what I have written, and will rest assured that I shall continue to interest myself in his fortunes.

Much honoured by your appeal to my judgment, I am, my dear madam, your obedient humble servant,

Fairfax.

To Mrs. Mary Washington.

My nephew Bushrod Washington, in arranging my papers, placed all my Fairfax letters in one packet, and thus it chances that lying next to this one is a letter from Bryan Fairfax, the brother of my older friend, written in 1778 from New York. I am pleased to find it here, and thus to be reminded of the vast changes through which time gives us opportunities. I had been able to stop the Whigs in New York from offensive attacks upon this gentleman, and on this he wrote:

There are times when favours conferred make a greater impression than at others; for, though

I have received many, I hope I have not been unmindful of them; yet that, at a time your popularity was at the highest and mine at the lowest, and when it is so common for men's political resentments to run up so high against those who differ from them in opinion, you should act with your wonted kindness toward me, has affected me more than any favour I have received; and such conduct could not be believed by some in New York, it being above the run of common minds.

When Lord Fairfax died in his ninety-second year, my old comrade, this Bryan Fairfax, became the heir to his title, but I believe never allowed himself the use of it, and, becoming a clergyman of our church, is still thus engaged.

The finding of these two letters moved me more than common. Two matters are alluded to in his lordship's letter to my mother which, otherwise, I might not have reminded myself of, and yet one of them had an important influence on my life.

I had been told, of a Sunday morning, of a great flock of ducks, of the kind called canvasback, and much esteemed. It was against our habits to shoot on this day, but towards evening, the temptation being great, I went to the shore and was about to

push off, when Peter, using the liberty of an old family servant, said I would make Mr. Fairfax and my brother, then like myself at Belvoir, angry if I went. When he held on to the prow to stay me, I suddenly lost my temper and struck him with an oar on the head. He fell down and lay in a sort of a shake. I thought he was killed, and had he been white I must surely have put an end to him; but the blacks have thick skulls, and presently he got up and staggered away, his head bleeding. I was both sorry and scared, for he would not wait when I called, but walked off to the quarters of the slaves.

I stood still a minute, and then went to the house and told Lawrence, and asked him to have the man looked after. Lawrence, being very angry, said: "This comes of your hot temper. Once our father nearly killed a man for a small matter, and that cured him; I hope this may cure you." I said nothing, and went to see if the man was badly hurt. Peter only laughed and said: "Master George, you hit mighty hard." I liked the man, and, although no one else spoke of the matter again, it had more effect on me than the many good resolutions I had written or made as to keeping

my temper. I have rarely lost it completely since that time: once at Monmouth, once after Edmund Randolph's treachery, and once when General Knox, then of my cabinet, showed me a vile caricature of myself being guillotined.

XII

LIKE other men, I have had my times of being irritable, but open anger is with me like to a tornado, and if I give way I am as is a ship in a storm when no anchors hold. General Hamilton, on one occasion, observed to me that there were some talents which it was good that men should know you to be possessed of, because once they were aware of this, you were not so apt to be called upon to use them, and this may be true of that rage of anger I now speak of. But I cannot think it a thing of value, nor of any real use; for if it follow another's actions, it can do no good, and there are better ways of showing disapprobation.

The other matter to which his lordship alludes is that I was, at this time, the victim of one of those attachments to a lady older than myself from which lads are apt to suffer. It was not the last, for in the

composition of the human frame there is a good deal of inflammable matter. My fancy lasted for some months, but was cured at last by hard work and life in the saddle. It was full time that I got away from the easy hospitality of Belvoir and Mount Vernon. A masterful nature amid slaves is not so well situated as among scenes where he has to contend with those who can resist. Since I became a man I never approved of human slavery, and surely the worst thing ever done to the colonies was the act of England in forcing upon us an endurance of the trade in slaves. The evil results of this tyranny I do not propose to discuss fully, but sure I am that the continuance of this form of servitude will some day give rise to troubles. I find myself, however, inclined to believe that the habit of mastery, also the aristocratic turn which society acquired in Virginia, had a certain value in our war with the mother country. In Virginia the minor officers, such as captains, were of a higher class than their privates, and for this reason, and on account of being from youth upward accustomed to command obedience and exact discipline, were in this respect well fitted for warfare.

In New England, especially, under more democratic circumstances, and also because there were few slaves, the officers, such as captains and lieutenants, were unused to control men who, being of their own class, acknowledged of late years no such differences of position as in Virginia, and were very insubordinate. I found in this state of things a serious obstacle to discipline when I first took command at Cambridge.

On the other hand, it is worthy of remark that no general officers of great distinction were of Southern birth. All of those on whom I learned to depend most largely were born in the North, or had lived long in the colonies north of Maryland. Of these were the generals Knox, Morgan, Wayne, Hamilton, Montgomery, Schuyler, Greene, and, alas! Arnold; and generally these were men who were not of the upper classes. This is a matter which I once had occasion to mention to Mr. Edmund Pendleton, who was of opinion that, as the first open warfare was at the North, and the first army there collected, it was natural that the early opportunities and high commissions should have fallen to men of the North. I was unable to deny this, but upon reflection it does not

present to me a satisfactory explanation, since the actual war lasted seven years and afforded many chances to men of all sections. I find myself naturally drawn into these reflections by the events of my early life, but such interruptions are of no moment, because I am endeavouring, for my own satisfaction and with no thought of others, to consider rather how certain steps in life prepared me for larger tasks, than with a view to any connected narration.

There lived near Mount Vernon at this time a man named Van Braam, a Dutchman, who, having served under my brother Lawrence at Cartagena, was used at times as a clerk. He was a slight, wiry little man, and dependent in those days on my brother's aid. He spoke French, but whether well or ill I was too ignorant to know; yet, because of his supposed knowledge, he came later to be the innocent means of getting himself and me into unpleasant difficulties. Like Lawrence, he was an accomplished swordsman; and I received from him lessons in the small sword, and became myself expert in this, as I have usually been in all exercise involving strength and accuracy, being more quick of body than of mind.

This talent of the sword was an accomplishment which I never had to use personally, nor have I ever been so unfortunate as to have needed it in the duel. Experience has proved that chance is often as much concerned in these encounters as bravery, and always more than the justice of the cause. I felt regret that my friend, General Cadwalader, should have exposed a valuable life to the pistol of a man like General Conway, especially since the real cause of the quarrel was, I am assured, language used by the latter which my friend knew I could not resent.

Indeed, in an affair like that of these two generals, it would have been reasonable to have decided by lot which was wrong; for a farthing was tossed as to who should be first to fire, and both were good shots. Happily, my friend was fortunate, and the other, who had considered his honour wounded, was now in addition wounded in his tongue—the organ which made all the mischief.

This lamentable manner of settling disputes was the occasion, while we lay at the Valley Forge, of our losing valuable officers. I have always discouraged it. Many

of the duels in the war might have been avoided by the help of judicious friends. When Captain Paul Jones desired to call out Mr. Arthur Lee, I dissuaded him from asking my friends, the two C——s, to be his advisers, on account of the too pugnacious tendencies of these gentlemen of Welsh blood.

XIII

THE question of whether I should become a surveyor by profession was much debated among us. My youth was against it, but I was in strength and seriousness older than my years. My mother opposed it, as she did every change, being of those who are defeated beforehand by obstacles. Without any better plan of life to offer, she insisted that it was not an occupation for a gentleman. This was, in a measure, true in Virginia. The bounds of estates were often vague or contested, and there was a strong prejudice against the persons employed to settle these disputes, or who were engaged in laying out new plantations beyond the Alleghanies, and who took daily wages, like mechanics.

The planters settled on the tide-water coast or on the rich river lands were long since uneasy because they feared the settlements made inland might interfere with

their control of the trade in tobacco, in the culture of which they were exhausting the soil. At one time the king endeavoured to prevent settlements beyond the mountains, under the pretence that they would be too little under government. It was believed, however, that the jealousy of the long-settled planters was the real means of bringing about this decree, which no one obeyed. The more enterprising families, who were disposed to engage in the acquisition of such lands, were looked upon with suspicion. Nor were their active agents regarded with favour. Indeed, long afterwards I was subject to reproach because of having been engaged in the occupation of a surveyor of lands. The prejudice entertained by the gentry of Virginia was not without foundation in the character of many of those who were thus employed, for they were not all of a decent class, and were subject to be influenced by bribes, so that out of their misconduct arose many tedious disputes as to boundaries.

Although among my elders there was much discussion as to my choice of a means of livelihood, I cannot remember that it in any way affected my own resolutions or,

in the end, those of my brothers. It was finally concluded that I was to serve under Mr. Genn, my former instructor in surveying, and was to be accompanied by Mr. George William Fairfax on a visit to the estate of Lord Fairfax.

The prospect of being able to earn my own living, and of a life in the wilderness, filled me with pleasure, and I set about preparing flints, powder, and shot for the new fowling-piece his lordship was so kind as to give me. I had the foresight, also, to take some lessons in the shoeing of horses, and, after a visit to my mother, was fully prepared for my journey.

I hold it most fortunate that my own inclinations and the good sense of my brothers set me to work at a time of life when temptations are most dangerous because of their novelty. Many of the young men I knew became brutal from contact with slaves, and spent their lives, like some of their elders, in fighting cocks and dogs and in running quarter-races. A few men were brought up to professions; but as estates were entailed on elder sons, or they, at least, received the larger portions, and there was no army or navy, the younger sons were

generally without occupation and apt to fall into evil ways. I little knew, when I rode away, how fortunate was my choice.

We set out on March 11, 1747, George William Fairfax and I, with two servants and a led horse, loaded with a pack and such baggage as could not be carried in saddle-bags. I was at this time ill, not having recovered from an attack of the ague; but the action of the horse and the feeling of adventure helped me, so that in a day or two I left off taking of Jesuits' bark, and was none the worse.

I have now before me the diary I kept as a lad of near sixteen years. It was not so well kept as it was later, but already in it I discover with interest that it turns to practical matters, like the value of the land and what could be produced on it.

As we were soon joined by my old master in surveying, James Genn, I learned a great deal more of his useful art, and usually earned a doubloon a day, but sometimes six pistoles. Although the idea of daily wages was unpleasant to Virginians of my class, I remember that it made me feel independent, and set a sort of value upon me which reasonably fed my esteem

of myself, which was, I do believe, never too great.

Our journey was without risks, except the rattlesnakes, and the many smaller vermin which inhabited the blankets in the cabins of the squatters.

I remember with pleasure the evening when I first saw the great fertile valley after we came through Ashby's Gap in the Blue Ridge. The snows were still melting, and on this account the streams were high and the roads the worst that could ever be seen, even in Virginia. The greatness of the trees I remember, and my surprise that the Indians should have so much good invention in their names, as when they called the river of the valley the Shen-an-do-ah—that is, the Daughter of the Stars; but why so named I never knew.

In this great vale were the best of Lord Fairfax's lands. Near to where this stream joins the Potomac were many clearings, of which we had to make surveys and insist on his lordship's ownership. Here were no hardships, and much pleasure in the pursuit of game, especially wild turkeys. I learned to cook, and how to make a bivouac comfortable, and many things which are part

of the education of the woods. Only four nights did I sleep in a bed, and then had more small company than I liked to entertain.

I copy here as it was wrote by me, a lad of sixteen, what we saw on a Wednesday. It might have been better spelled.

At evening we were agreeably surprised by ye sight of thirty odd Indians coming from war with only one scalp. We gave them some liquor, which, elevating their spirits, put them in ye humour of dancing. They seat themselves around a great fire, and one leaps up as if out of a sleep, and runs and jumps about ye ring in a most comicle manner; afterward others. Then begins there musicians to play and to beat a pot half full of water, with a deer-skin tied tight over it, and a gourd with some shott in it to rattle, and piece of a horse tail tied to it to make it look fine.

The Dutch, then of late come in from Pennsylvania, I found an uncouth people, who, having squatted, as we say, on lands not their own, hoped to acquire cheap titles. They were merry and full of antic tricks. I talked with some by an interpreter and heard them say they cared not who were the masters, French or English, if only they

were let to farm their lands. This amazed me, who was brought up to despise the French as frog-eating folk, and, indeed, this indifference of the Dutch became a matter of concern when we had a war with the French.

After one night in a Dutch cabin I liked better a bearskin and the open air, for it was not to my taste to lie down on straw—very populous—or on a skin with a man, wife, and squalling babies, like dogs and cats, and to cast lots who should be nearest the fire.

I did not like these people, and the Indians interested me more. Genn understood their tongue well enough to talk with them, and the way they had of sign-language pleased Lord Fairfax, because, he said, you could not talk too much in signs or easily abuse your neighbour; but I found they had a sign for cutting a man's throat, and it seemed to me that was quite enough, and worse than abuse. Mr. Genn warned me that one of their great jokes was, when shaking hands with white men, to squeeze so as to give pain. Being warned, I gave the chief who was called Big Bear such a grip that, in his surprise, he cried out, and

thus much amused the other warriors. This incident is not in my diary, and I find it remarkable that now, after so many years, it should come to mind, when even some more serious affairs are quite forgot.

XIV

EARLY in April, having completed our work, I crossed the mountains afoot to the Great Cacapehon, and, passing over the Blue Ridge, on April 12 found myself again at Mount Vernon. But before that I first rode on to Belvoir, that I might be prompt to answer his lordship's questions. All he would talk about was how to get horse and man over rivers, and of a way I learned of an Indian to wade across a strong swift stream safely, even breast-high, by carrying a heavy stone to keep me on my feet. He advised me to learn the sign-language of the savages.

He was soon to set out for the valley, where he meant to lay out the manor of Greenway Court and there reside. He desired me to come and help to survey his great domain.

There must be some natural taste in man for the life in the woods, and, for my

part, I longed ever to return to them, of which, sooner or later, I had many opportunities. Nor did the free life make me less, but rather more, practical, and I learned to observe the trees, and how the land lay, and the meadows, whether liable to flood or not, all of which enabled me not only to serve my employers well, but was of use to me when I became able to purchase land myself.

About this time the influence of Lord Fairfax and my brothers obtained for me the place of surveyor of the county of Culpeper. I saw, a few years ago, in the records of Culpeper Court House, under date of July 20, 1749, that George Washington, gentleman, produced a commission from the president and masters of William and Mary College appointing him to be a surveyor of the county, whereupon he took the oath to his Majesty's person and government, and subscribed the abjuration oath, the test, etc.

I recall now the pleasure this formal appointment gave me. Although I was then but seventeen years old, I was much trusted and was soon busily employed, because of my exactness, and because it was known

that I could not be bribed; and thus for over two years I pursued this occupation. His lordship had long since this time left his cousin's house of Belvoir and gone to live in the valley, in his steward's house, which now he bettered and enlarged for his own use, meaning soon to build a great mansion-house, which he never did.

His home was a long, low stone dwelling, with a sloped roof, and many coops where swallows came, and bird-cotes under the eaves, and around it on all sides a wide porch, with, in every direction, the great forest of gum and hickory and oaks, and the tulip-trees. I found the roads much improved on my first visit, and many outbuildings for slaves and others, with kennels for the hounds his lordship loved to follow. My own room was ever after kept for me. It had a wide dormer-window, and next to it a room with more books than I had ever seen before, except at Westover, Colonel Byrd's great mansion.

I never passed the time more agreeably. When not absent laying out land, we hunted and shot game, especially wild turkeys, which abounded; and when the weather served us ill I read the history of

England, and tried to please his lordship by reading Shakspere and other books of verse. But although I had by hard labor managed to lay out and plot verses to certain young women, I never found much pleasure in the use of the imagination, nor in what others made of it. It seemed to me tedious and without practical value, nor did it amuse me except when it was in a play.

For days at a time I sometimes saw nothing of this kind but eccentric nobleman. A woman in England was said to have wounded his life, and it was rare that we had any female guests at Greenway Court, except Anne Cary, the sister of George William Fairfax's wife. I found it not good for me to be in her company, for in some way she brought to my mind a boy love, which I had resolved no more to entertain, but which I found it difficult to master.

Miss Cary stayed no long time, and others came and went, but for the most part I had his lordship to myself. There were days when he was absent in the woods with a servant, or alone. At others he would remain all day shut up in a small log house,

not over fifteen feet square, where he slept, and, as he said, very ill. It was his custom, however, to join me at supper, and then to remain smoking, which I never learned, and taking his punch. He was either full of talk or so silent that we would not exchange a word while he sat staring into the fire. Sometimes, when tired, I fell asleep, and, on waking, found him gone to bed. When disposed for conversation, he was apt to be bitter about his native land, and once said that the best part of it had come away.

My brother Lawrence and he were the only persons of our own class I ever knew in those days who, to my surprise, foresaw serious trouble from the selfish policy of the crown and the greed of English merchants, who desired to keep us shut out of the natural way of sea trade. I should have been most ungrateful, which I never was, had I not felt my obligations to Lord Fairfax. His great wealth and high position kept even my mother satisfied that what pleased my patron could never be complained of, and so, for a season, I was let to go my own way.

He led me to feel sure that, soon or late,

we must be at war with both France and the Indians, or else submit to be shut out of the fertile lands to the westward. He was almost the only Englishman of high rank whom we saw in Virginia. There were governors with their secretaries, and officers of the army, but, except my lord, all of them regarded the gentlemen of the colonies as inferior persons. This feeling was, I apprehend, due to the fact that we looked to England for everything, and were in many ways kept as dependent as children. He once said to me that we were like slow bullocks that did not know their power to resist. This was all strange to a young Virginian in those days. I have lived to see its wisdom, and now, as I think of it, am reminded that Mr. Hamilton once wrote to me, "a colony was always a colony, and never could be a country until it had altogether to stand on its own legs."

This was spoken of Canada, which unwisely refused to make common cause with us, and will now be for us at least a troublesome, if not a dangerous neighbour.

But to see her in the hands of France was not, as the matter presented itself, to be desired, for which reason I did not at

a later time encourage Marquis Lafayette in his design upon Canada, knowing that if we succeeded in the war, and with French troops were able to take Canada, France would claim it as her share of the spoils, and thus hem us in from Louisiana to the Great Lakes. Indeed, this was very early a constant fear throughout all the colonies, and especially in New England, where the notion of being shut in by a popish nation added to their uneasiness.

When considering this matter, I recall the effect of the capitulations of 1759, for at that time, in order to quiet the French after England had taken Canada, and to get the Canadians to accept willingly English rule, vast and unwise privileges were granted to the Church of Rome. Still later the Quebec Act of 1774 decreed that Quebec should be held to extend over all the country west of the Ohio and up to the lakes, and thus that the privileges enjoyed by the Romish Church should prevail over all this great dominion.

While the Stamp Act and the laws restrictive of trade did variously annoy the separate colonies, the Quebec Act produced a still more general dissatisfaction.

XV

WHILE at Greenway Court I had other teachers besides his lordship, for many Indians, frontier traders, and trappers came to claim food and shelter, which were never denied them. Often the woods were lighted up by their fires, and I found it of use, and interesting, to hear what was said and to learn something of the uncertain ways of the savages.

I heard how the Delawares, Shawnees, and Iroquois had wandered from the north and taken to the lands about the Ohio, and how the French protected them and claimed all the country up to the Alleghanies.

To these camps came the rude, lawless traders from Pennsylvania, who had stories to tell of the Indians and of the French beyond the Ohio. These men foresaw a war on the frontier when scarce any others did, and, by their accounts of the fertility of the wide savannas beyond the Ohio, filled

me with desire to explore this rich wilderness. I learned that already the French had warned the fur-traders to leave and had driven away their hunters, and when I mentioned this to Lawrence he said we were not easy folk to drive, and, least of all, Pennsylvania Quakers, and that there would be trouble, which there was soon enough. We were on the edge of a struggle in which all the world was to share. Meanwhile, time went on, and what Lord Fairfax called the "frontier pot" was boiling.

I was often back at home, sometimes with my mother, or at Belvoir, or at Mount Vernon, riding to hounds, surveying, and making more than I needed in the way of money, and enough to keep me in horseflesh and to give me better clothes, for which I have always had a fancy. Only in the woods I liked best such dress as our rangers wear, and good moccasins are the best of foot-gear. But as to clothing, when not in the woods, I found in myself a liking for a plain genteel dress of the best, without lace or embroidery. Fine clothes do not make fine men, and the man must be foolish who has a better opinion of himself

because his clothes are such as the truly judicious and sensible do not advise.

Until I had money of my own I did not venture much at cards; but now I played a little, although I was never fond of it, and lost more than I made. I was more inclined to the game of billiards.

If at times I was in danger of leaning towards the rough ways of the wilderness, I had the advantage of seeing at Mount Vernon, or at the homes of the Carters and Lees, or among the Lewises of Warner Hall, and elsewhere, the older gentry, who were orderly and ceremonious, and who reminded me anew of his lordship's lesson as to the value of good manners.

Sometimes on these great plantations I was employed in surveys, but at others, as at Shirley and the Corbins', I was only a guest. I was, I conceive, unlike the idle young men of some of these houses, for I was over-grave and cared less for card-playing and hard drinking than suited them.

I found myself at this time preferring the society of women, who are always amiably disposed to overlook the shyness of men like myself, and with whom it is pos-

sible to be agreeable without either punch or tobacco; but racing of horses I always liked, and dancing.

In those days cock-fighting was also to my liking. I remember well, because it was at Yorktown, a great main of cocks in 1752 between Gloucester and York for five pistoles each battle, and one hundred the odd. I was disappointed to leave before it was decided. I saw there a greater cock-fight in after days.

I recall now that my brother Lawrence once wrote home from Appleby School that each boy must pay to the master on Easter Tuesday a penny to provide the school with a cock-fight.

As to the hard drinking of rum and bumbo, Madeira and sangaree, I never had a head for it, or any liking, nor for the English way of locking doors until the half were under the table. These things were not encouraged in the better houses, but sometimes they were not to be avoided without giving offence. The great war helped to better these foolish customs, and now they are more rare.

I remember, about this time, to have seen such an occasion on a hot day in July at

L—— Hall, where I was come to survey a plot of meadow-land. I arrived about 7 P.M., and I must needs go at once to sup with a gay company of men, very fine in London clothes. I would have excused myself to be of the party, but no one would listen to me, and, although dusty and tired, I was pulled in whether I would or not. We had a great supper, and Madeira wine, and much rum punch, with wine-glasses which had no stands or bottoms and must, therefore, be kept in the hand until emptied. When it became very warm, negroes were sent for to fan us and to keep off the flies. At last there was a dispute as to game-cocks, and two were fetched in, very sleepy, and set on the table to fight, which they were little of a mind to, but were urged until feathers and blood were all over the table. When songs were sung, and most very drunk, and the King toasted, I slipped away, and would have got out the door, but found it locked. Being unable to escape, I was forced to return to the table. At last a lighted candle having been set before each guest, our host called on us to rise, and when he cried out his toast, "The Ladies, God bless them!" each gentleman, having

drained his glass, used it to extinguish the candle-light set before him. It seemed to me a strange custom. I took advantage of the darkness to get out of an open window, and was pursued by two or three, who fell on the way, so that I got back to the house and to bed, liking none of it. But now all this is much amended, and there is more moderation in drinking, but still too much of this evil custom.

I am led here to remark that in the War of Independency many officers who were otherwise competent failed because of drunkenness, and, indeed, at Germantown this was one cause of our losing the battle. When it became needful after St. Clair's defeat in 1791 to appoint general officers, I furnished my cabinet with a statement of the names and characters of such officers as, having served under me, I knew should be considered. As concerned most of them, I found it well to state whether or not they were addicted to spirits, so common was this practice.

It seems very remarkable that so few gentlemen should have foreseen what was plain to the trappers and dealers in furs. All of the Ohio country was claimed by both

French and English. The Indians, although cheated and made drunk, were still in possession of the woods they considered to be their own. Virginia claimed what Pennsylvania, and even Connecticut, said was theirs; Pennsylvania was reaping the only harvest of the wilderness, of the value of some fifty thousand pounds a year, the trade in furs; last of all, in 1749, some enterprising gentlemen in England and Virginia planned the Ohio Company, meaning to colonize even north of the Ohio.

When Mr. Thomas Lee, president of the council, died, my brother Lawrence became the head of the Ohio Company, and all of this, as I now see, had much to do with the next change in my life. I find it pleasant again to dwell here on the good sense and liberal spirit of my brother, who, had his life been spared, would surely have been chosen to do that which has fallen to me. His character is well seen in his desire that the Dutch from Pennsylvania, whom he invited as settlers, being dissenters and having come into the jurisdiction of Virginia, should not be forced to pay parish rates and support clergymen of the Church of England, as all dissenters were obliged to

do. He urged that restraints of conscience were cruel, and injurious to the country imposing them, and he wrote:

> I may quote as example England, Holland, and Prussia, and, much more, Pennsylvania, which has flourished under that delightful liberty, so as to become the admiration of every man who considers the short time it has been settled, whereas Virginia has increased by slow degrees, although much older.

There, on our borders, as Lord Fairfax said, was much powder, and only one spark needed to set it off. Meanwhile Mr. Gist set out to survey the grant of the Ohio Company, on the south side of the Ohio River, all of which was greatly to concern my life.

Virginia and Pennsylvania were, at that time, much stirred up by the hostile threats of France, and efforts began to be made to prepare for hostilities on the frontier. About this time, but the exact date I fail to recall, my brother Lawrence abandoned all concern in the military line of life, and arranged that his place of major in the militia should be given up to me, and that I should also take his position as district adjutant.

XVI

DURING the summer of 1751 I saw with affectionate anxiety a great change in the health of my brother Lawrence. I remember no event of my life which caused me more concern. Since our father's death he had been both father and friend. Had it not been for him, I should not have known Mr. Fairfax and his cousin, Lord Fairfax, nor without their help could I have become employed in a way which brought about my service on the frontier and all that came after. Thus, in the providence of the Ruler of the events of this world, one step leads on to another, and we are always being educated for that which is to come.

At last, in September, Lawrence, who had been long ill of a phthisical complaint, asked me to go with him to the Barbados. Therefore, while Mr. Gist's surveys on the Ohio went on, and both English and French

were making bids to secure the Indians, we were on the sea. It is far from my purpose to recall what, after a constant habit, is set down in my diary. I lost in the Barbados what good looks a clear skin gave me, because of a mild attack of smallpox, such as a third of the human race must expect, and I remain slightly pitted to this day.

What most struck me in the islands was the richness of the soil, and yet that nearly all the planters were in debt, and estates over-billed and alienated. They were all spendthrifts, and I remind myself that I resolved at that time never to be in the grasp of the enemy called Debt. How persons coming to estates of three hundred or four hundred acres could want was to me most wonderful.

Lawrence now declared for Bermuda, and as he seemed better, I felt able to leave him and return. To be torn by the demands of public duty on the one hand and by the call of affection on the other, I have many times been subjected to. Lawrence insisted that matters at home made urgent my return, and, indeed, through life I have always held that the public service comes first.

I reached home in the ship *Industry,* in February, 1752, having had enough of the sea in a five weeks' voyage, and very stormy.

Lawrence was at times better and desired to remain a year in Bermuda, and for me to fetch his wife. But soon his mind changed, and he wrote that he was resolved to hurry home, as he said, to his grave.

In the little time that was between his return and his passing away, I was much in his company—nor have I ever since been long without thought of him; for, although I am not disposed to speak much of sorrow, nor ever was, his great patience under suffering, and how he would never complain, but comfort his wife and me as if we were those in pain, and not he, have often been in my mind, and particularly of late, since the increase of my own infirmities has reminded me that the end of life cannot be very remote.

I am of opinion that I must have seemed, when younger, to be a dull, plodding lad; but, as time went on, Lawrence came to think more of me than did any, except Lord Fairfax, and in this his last illness gave me such evidence of his esteem as greatly

strengthened my hope that I should justify his belief in me.

General Hamilton once asked me whether I did not think that at the approach of death men seem sometimes to acquire such clearness of mind as they might be thought to obtain beyond the grave. I had to reply that such considerations were remote from my usual subjects of reflection; but what he then said, although I had no suitable reply, reminded me of certain things Lawrence said to me, and of his certainty that I should attain honourable distinction. I thought him then more affectionate than just, for I have never esteemed myself very highly; but I know that I have never ceased to do what I believed to be my duty, and as to this my conscience is clear.

My dear Lawrence died at Mount Vernon, July 12, 1752, aged thirty-five years, and thus I lost the man who had most befriended me. As his infant daughter Sarah inherited his estate, and I, although only twenty years old, was one of his executors, my time was fully occupied by this and by the increase of public duties, which were made heavy by the want of good officers

and by the insubordination and drunkenness of their men. Even then I saw what must come of it all if we had a serious war, for the militia could not by law be used more than five miles outside of the colony, and we should have to rely upon volunteers for more extended service.

The little maid, my niece, at Mount Vernon, did not live long after her father's death, and thus, as I have before stated, in 1754 the estate fell to me under the will of my father. It was charged with a life-interest in favour of my brother's wife, who soon married Mr. George Lee of Westmoreland. I was obligated to pay her fifteen thousand pounds of tobacco yearly; and as the estate, because of Lawrence's illness, had fallen away, I was little the better for the property until her death in 1761.

XVII

ON my brother's return, although very ill, he interested himself in my future, and it was, no doubt, in part due to his influence that, before his death, I was called to Williamsburg, the seat of government, by Governor Dinwiddie, who told me he was advised to make me one of the adjutant-generals. To my surprise, he seemed to consider me competent, and, owing to my brother, and probably also to the advice of the Fairfaxes, I received this appointment for the Northern Division, one of the four now newly created, with the rank of major and one hundred and fifty colonial pounds a year.

To this day I do not fully understand why I so easily secured this important appointment. I was only nineteen and knew nothing of war. As I consider the matter, there were many more experienced men, who, like Lawrence, had served at sea and

on land. The other adjutants were older than I. One of them said I would have a bitter business, for the chief use of the militia was to search negro cabins for arms and to get drunk on training-days. Nevertheless, as I knew well enough, there was good stuff in the men of Virginia, and no better could be found than the men of the frontier, who were expert with the rifle and were more than a match for the Indians. As I learned from Lawrence, the candidates for these places of adjutant were either too old or were men of drunken habits; and as to the wandering soldiers of fortune who had had experience in war, they were not gentlemen of our own class, and this, I understood, was a question which the governor and council considered important.

When I went again to accept and thank the governor for the appointment, he talked to me at some length, and I learned that he was more largely interested in the Ohio Company than I had previously known, and that one reason for my appointment was my familiarity with the frontier country, where I might have to serve. Without further troubling myself as to why I, a

young man of nineteen, was thus chosen, I set earnestly about my work. I found it no easy task. I myself had much to learn, and, by Lawrence's advice, secured Mr. Muse, formerly adjutant of a regiment, who had served with my brother in the Spanish war and now resided near us in Westmoreland. This old soldier lent me books on tactics, and taught me the manual of the soldier, which was to prove of small value on the frontier. Van Braam was also put to use, as I wished now to learn the broadsword.

Meanwhile, at intervals, I rode through the counties of my district, and did my best to ascertain how many men could be counted on, and to stiffen the lax discipline of the county militia.

I soon discovered that the governor, Robert Dinwiddie, was more intent on making money than on governing wisely.

Appointments to office, in my youth, were very often obtained through family and other influence, and were, like mine, critically considered by many. Indeed, in this year, not long before Lawrence died, Mr. George Fairfax mentioned to me that, being at Greenway Court, and Mr. Meade

present, that gentleman inquired of him how it chanced that a man so young as I should have succeeded to obtain what older men had failed to get. His lordship replied for his cousin that he was mistaken as to my age, for all the Washingtons were born old, and he supposed that I was near about thirty. Mr. Meade said that it was thought my lord knew best who pulled the strings, but to this, as George Fairfax said, laughing, his lordship only smoked a reply.

This Mr. Meade was the father of Richard, who served well as one of my aides in the great war. David Meade, the second son, was of those who believed that Colonel Byrd should have been made commander-in-chief by the Congress. It may be that he was right, or would have been so had Colonel Byrd been more decided in his opinions. He had both ability and military experience.

Mr. Meade was not alone in this opinion, and was said to have himself entertained the belief that, although I was, as he said, a good business man and of irreproachable morals, Colonel Byrd of Westover was my superiour in some respects and in none my inferiour, and of even greater experience in

war. I have had at times to contradict the statement that there was no opposition to my appointment. I may add that I made no effort to secure it, and I am sure that no one doubted my capacity for the command more than I myself; but of this I have already said enough.

There were many in and out of the Congress who preferred others. More than one of the Virginia delegation has been said to have been cool in the matter, and Mr. Edmund Pendleton was clear and full against my appointment. I have always taught myself never to resent opposition founded on honest beliefs or entertained by those of unblemished character. Colonel Madison once said to me that time is a great peacemaker, but I have rarely needed it. My breast never harboured a suspicion that the opposition then made was due to personal unfriendliness, for no man could have had more reasonable doubt of my fitness than I myself. Nor have I ever permitted the remembrance to affect my actions, and I have lived to have unequivocal proofs of the esteem of some who most opposed me.

XVIII

LIKE all Virginians, I was disturbed during this time by the news of the insolence of the French on the frontier, and began to feel that my brother's money, put into the Ohio Company, was in peril, for we were like to be soon cooped up by a line of forts, and our trade in peltries was already almost at an end, and about to pass into the hands of the French. We learned with pleasure that the royal governors were ordered to insist on the retirement of these overbusy French, who claimed all the land up to the Alleghanies, but I did not dream that I was soon to take part in the matter.

About that time, or before, there had been much effort to secure the Six Nations of Indians as allies. One of their chiefs, Tanacharisson, known as the Half-King, because of holding a subsidiary rule among the Indians, advised a fort to be built by us near to the Forks of the Ohio, on the east

bank, and Gist, the trader, set out on this errand. A Captain Trent was charged to carry our King's message to the French outposts; but having arrived at Logstown, one hundred and fifty miles from his destination, and hearing of the defeat of our allies, the Miamis, by the French, he lost heart and came back to report. The Ohio Company at this time complained to the governor of the attacks on their traders, and this gentleman, being concerned both for his own pocket and for his Majesty's property, resolved to send some one of more spirit to bear the King's message ordering the French to retire and to cease to molest our fur traders about the Ohio.

It was unfortunate that Governor Robert Dinwiddie, who was now eager to defend his interests in the Ohio Company, had lost the prudent counsel of its late head, my brother Lawrence. He would have made a better envoy than I, for at the age of twenty-one a man is too young to influence the Indians, on account of a certain reverence they have for age in council. I was ignorant of what was intended when I received orders to repair to Williamsburg. To my surprise, and I may say to my plea-

sure, I learned that I was to go to Logstown. I was there to meet our allies, the Indians, and secure from them an escort and guides, and so push on and find the French commander. I was to deliver to him my summons, and wait an answer during one week, and then to return. I was also to keep my eyes open as to all matters of military concern.

Whatever distrust I had in regard to my powers as an envoy, I said nothing, for in case of an order a soldier has no alternative but to obey. Had I been in the governor's place I should have sent an older man.

I received my credentials at Williamsburg, and rode away the day after, October 31, 1753, intending no delay.

Van Braam was assigned to me as my French interpreter, and I gathered my outfit of provisions, blankets, and guns at Alexandria, and horses, tents, and other needed matters at Winchester, and was joined near Wills Creek—where now is the settlement called Cumberland—by Mr. Gist and an Indian interpreter, one Davidson.

The same day, November 13, to my pleasure, Lord Fairfax rode into camp and spent the night. It was raining and at times

snowing, but Gist soon set up a lean-to, and with our feet to the fire we talked late into the night, his lordship smoking, as was his habit.

I have many times desired to be able to make drawings of the greater trees, but, although I could plot a survey well, beyond this I could never go. I speak of this because of my remembrance of that night, and how mighty the trees seemed by the campfire light around the clearing. It was his lordship who called my attention to the trees. He had a way, most strange to me, of suddenly dropping the matter in hand before it was fully considered. He would be silent a space and speak no more, or turn presently to another matter most remote. All of this I learned to accept without remonstrance, out of respect for this great gentleman, as was fitting in one of my years. I never got accustomed to his ways, for it has been always my desire to deal with the subject in hand fully and to an end. Nor did I see this wilderness as his lordship saw it; for, while I made note of trees for what logs they would afford, and as to the soil and the lay of the land, his lordship I have seen stand for ten minutes

looking at a great tree as though he found much to consider of it. In like manner I have seen him stop when the hounds were in full cry, a thing most astonishing, and sit still in the saddle, looking down at a brook or up at the sunrise.

As we lay by the fire he remained without speaking for a long while, until the men, having found some old and dried birch logs, cast them on the fire, and a great roaring red flame lighted the woods and was blown about by the cold wind. His lordship said, "See, George, how the shadows of the trees are dancing"—a thing very wild, that I never should have much noticed had not he called on me to observe it. After this he was silent until suddenly he began to ask questions as to my men and my route, and what I meant to do and say in the French camps. At last he said, "You are going to stir up a nest of hornets," and, finally, that the former messenger, Trent, was a coward.

When he had again been silent a long while, he said that this time, at least, he was not responsible for my appointment, and Dinwiddie was a fool to send a boy on a man's errand. This was my own opinion,

but I made no reply. At last he filled his pipe again, and called for a coal, and said, "But by George, George, you never were a boy, not since I knew you." I ventured to say that but for his former influence this office would not have come to me. To this he made no answer, but bid me distrust every Indian, especially the Half-King, who was not treacherous but uncertain, and not less every Frenchman, and added that I was so young that they would think that I could be easily fooled. I said that might be an advantage, for I meant to see all there was to see, and had told Van Braam to keep his ears open.

His lordship laughed, and said I might thank Heaven there were no women in the business, and with this, bidding me have the fire made up for the night, we lay down to sleep in the lean-to.

I find it interesting now in my old age to discover myself thus able to recall, little by little, what his lordship said. I was pleased at the notice he took of me, but a lad, and lay long awake under the lean-to, thinking upon such counsels as his lordship had been pleased to give.

XIX

AS I turn over the diary in which I recorded my journey through this wilderness, I find myself remembering many little incidents which I never set down.

It rained or snowed almost daily. The rivers were swollen, so that we had to swim our horses, an art which soldiers should be taught. Although Van Braam much enlivened the way by his songs and very doubtful tales of his wars, I was very tired and my new buckskin coat in tatters when we arrived at the mouth of Turtle Creek on the Monongahela. There we found Frazier, a trader whom the French had driven out of the Indian town of Venango. With two canoes he lent me I sent our baggage down the Monongahela to the fork, where, with the Alleghany River, it joins the Ohio, and set out on a bad trail to meet them.

We got to the Forks of the Ohio before the canoes. There, I settled in my mind,

was the place for a fort, nor could I better that judgment to-day. It came afterwards to be chosen by the French engineer Mercier to be Fort Duquesne. On the rise of ground we made camp, and paid a visit to Shingiss of the Delawares, who pretended to favour us, but proved later a savage foe.

Gist insisted that he could tell from their faces how the Indians felt towards us, but to me they told nothing, and are in this respect unlike the faces of white men.

We got to Logstown, fifteen miles down the Ohio, on November 24. Here I met the Indian known as the Half-King. He was angry at the French claims, and I did not too strongly put forward those of the King, which were not much better founded; but that was for my superiours to decide. I found him hard to satisfy, but if I spoke of the French he was at once angered, and eager to help. I watched with interest as he drew with charcoal on birch bark the plan of their forts at French Creek and on Lake Erie, while Davidson interpreted his words.

The nearest way was impassable because of marshy savannas, and I found I must needs travel north so as to reach the lake,

by passing through Venango. This, the Half-King informed me, was five sleeps distant, and expressed it by five times drawing up his hands, as a man does when pulling up his blankets before sleeping.

It was fortunately arranged that the Half-King, White Thunder, and two more chiefs should go with me. It was but seventy miles to Venango, but the weather could not have been worse, and so it was December 4 before we rode into the clearing the French had made around the big log house out of which they had driven the trader John Frazier.

I recall what is not set down in my diary, the anger and shame with which I saw the flag of France flying over the big cabin. As I came out of the woods, a lean, dark-faced man came forward with three French officers, and I learned that he was Captain Joncaire, the worst enemy we had, for he was a half-breed and had the tongues of the Indians. He said he had command on the Ohio, but we must push on to see his general. He was very merry, and laughed every minute or two, but was on his guard like the others.

Three days passed before I could get away, with La Force, the guide they gave

me, and three soldiers for escort. Meanwhile Joncaire entertained us at a supper. I never had better cause to be thankful for my sobriety, which was a rare virtue at that day, and even later, among all classes. The big log cabin had a great table set out with game and French kickshaws, such as were strange to me. None of the French spoke English nor understood it, and of my people Van Braam alone had any French. They all dosed themselves freely with wine and brandy, and pretty soon the French felt it and began to give their tongues license and to brag and talk loosely. I was never more amused in all my life, for as Joncaire boasted of what they meant to do, Van Braam, who was an old soldier with a head used to potations, chattered what seemed to be a kind of French, which set the drunken fools a-laughing. Amid all the noise, and the smoke which nearly choked me, Van Braam now and then spoke to me, telling me what they said, and of their mind to seize and hold the country. Next day he was still more full as to their talk, and did me a service, which, in spite of the hurt he innocently did me later, I never forgot.

I was glad to get away at last, for when

Joncaire found the Half-King, who was hid away in my camp, which I had made in the woods at a distance, he got the poor savage drunk with rum and loaded him with gifts. Four days later, and very tired, I was at French Creek, where was a great fort, fifteen miles from Lake Erie. Much against my will, Joncaire had sent with me La Force, as great a lover of mischief as could be found. This fellow was the leanest man I ever saw, and saddle-coloured. When he spoke to me he stared constantly, which is as unpleasant as to avoid entirely to meet a man's gaze. He made no end of trouble, and had later his reward, and perhaps more punishment than he deserved.

I met at this station many educated French officers, such as I was to make welcome at another time. I could not avoid to be pleased with the commandant, by name Legardeur de St. Pierre, a chevalier of St. Louis. He was an old soldier, very tall and straight, and with much grey hair, and had lost an eye in battle. This gentleman was most courteous, and had brisk, pleasing ways, very frank and outspoken. He desired to be remembered to Lord Fairfax, whom he had known in Paris long ago.

The chevalier, by good fortune, spoke English enough to make his company very agreeable, and I became sure, as I spent some days in his society, that he made no attempt to deceive me; for nothing could have been more plain than that he meant to hold the country for his king.

He was pleased to relate his campaigns in Europe, and, although he was apt, like old soldiers, to be lengthy as to these, I found him to be instructive.

He talked lightly of women, but so did his officers, and in a manner we in Virginia should have considered to be unmannerly or worse. Also he told me that the French encouraged their soldiers to take wives among the young squaws, a thing our people never inclined to do. He seemed to have known many English gentlemen who had been in Paris, and even why Lord Fairfax had left England, all of which story I could have heard from him if I had thought proper so to do, which I did not. He did say, and was very merry about it, that if a woman drove his lordship to America, another might drive him back, for, after all, we were only shuttlecocks, and were knocked to and fro by the women—and I might say

so to his lordship with the chevalier's compliments.

I remember that when, after this journey, I had returned home, my sister Betty was agreeably interested to hear what the chevalier had said of the old lord, who was the only person who could keep Betty quiet for five minutes. I had to answer that I had not seen fit to inquire further. Upon this she declared that some day she should ask his lordship all about it. When I laughed and made no other reply, she declared that I was as silent as my lord, and that I had lost a fine opportunity. I contented myself with the chevalier's compliments to Lord Fairfax, who said if that was all the old fellow had said he must have changed, for he was a gossiping old reprobate and fit to corrupt me. But for my part I liked him and found him a gallant gentleman, and only of a mind to serve his king, as I was to serve mine.

There was no unreasonable delay, for the chevalier made clear to me that nothing could be done until after they had held a council. I arrived on the 12th, and on the 14th they were able to give me a sealed reply to the governor's summons. Meanwhile I

had been left free to inspect the fort and count the canoes made ready for use in the spring. I must admit that they seemed careless as to what I saw. There were many Indians and French and half-breeds coming and going. The fort was square, of logs, with palisadoes, a forge, and a chapel, all very neat and clean, and much ceremony when we came in and went out.

XX

I WAS now very eager to go, but notwithstanding the polite ways of the commandant, I found needless delays as to guides and supplies. This was to gain time to win the Half-King, who was of our side to-day, and the next had what the Indians call "two hearts." I cannot say that ever in my life I suffered as much anxiety as I did in this affair. The Half-King, being half drunk, assured me the chevalier was keeping him. That officer swore that he was ignorant why we did not go, but this I determined not to do without Tanacharisson. One day a gun was promised the savage, another day all my sachems were dead drunk. I was in despair, for to lose the Half-King to the wiles of the French would be a serious matter, and I was resolved not to fail. But here was I, a lad of twenty-one, playing a game with old, astute men for the prize of a drunken Indian!

Finally Gist succeeded in keeping him sober a day, and yet, as he said, reasonably intoxicated with promises of great gifts; and so at last, on December 16, we gladly bade farewell and set out in our birch canoes to go down French Creek.

A cannon was fired, and the officers assembled on shore saluted us politely as we left the fort. The commandant sent one canoe loaded with strong liquors to be used on the way, and at Venango to overcome the wits of Tanacharisson.

Each of us, Gist and Van Braam and Davidson, was seated very comfortably in the middle of a canoe of birch bark; at the bow and stern were Indians or half-breeds, and, as the water was very rapid most of the way, they used poles of ash to hold and guide the canoes. On the 18th December we were no longer comfortable. The ice was thick, and we had all of us to wade and, in places, to portage. On the 22d we came to a strong rapid. Gist advised to land and portage the provisions. This we did, and, being arrived before the French canoes, stood to watch them descend, a fine sight. About half-way the man on the bow of one canoe—that with the liquors—caught his

pole between two rocks. He should have let it go; but as he did not, the boat slued square to the stream and, filling, turned over, so that all the brandy was lost, to my satisfaction. The men got out, with no great ease, swearing oaths, both French and Indian.

It rained and froze, and when, at fall of night, we came to Venango on December 22, we were cased in ice like men in armour. I was never more glad of a fire.

Here Captain Chabert de Joncaire set to work again to convince my Half-King with the bottle. But by good luck the sachem was much disordered in his stomach because of the rum he had of St. Pierre, and when Gist persuaded him the French had bewitched the liquor, he would none of it. Here we found our horses, but very lean, and, after a rest, set out by land from Venango, over a bad trail, this being about December 25.

It was a horrible journey, the men getting frozen feet and the packhorses failing, until, in despair at the delay, on the third day, against Gist's advice, I left Van Braam to follow me with the horses and men, and determined to strike through the

woods by compass to the Forks of the Ohio, and thus be enabled the sooner to report to the governor.

For this venture Gist and I put on match-coats, Indian dress, thick socks, and moccasins. We carried packs, with my papers tied up in tanned skin, and as much provision as we could manage. With our guns, and thus cumbered, we left the camp and struck out through the woods, where to move by compass is no easy matter, because to go straight is not possible where every tree and bit of swamp must turn a man to this side or that. But by taking note of some great pine in front of us, and, on reaching it, of another, we made good progress, and for part of the way we had an Indian trail.

On the third day, the snow being deep, we struck up the southeast fork of Beaver Creek. Here were a few Indians camped, who seemed to expect us, but how they could have done this I never knew; but there is much about Indian ways of communication of which I must confess myself ignorant.

They were too curious to please Gist; but as we were now in midwinter, and to pass

through a wilderness with no trails, we engaged, for we could do no better, an Indian as guide and to carry my pack. Gist mistrusted him, and I soon shared his opinion.

We left at break of day, and after ten miles were in doubt as to our route, I with one foot chafed and the most tired I ever was in my life, on account of plunging through drifts, where, on his snow-shoes, the Indian was at ease. At this time he would have carried my gun, but I refused. When we said we would camp and rest, he declared the Ottawas would see our fire-smoke and surprise us. Upon this we kept on, as he said, toward his cabin. Once he told Gist he heard whoops, and then a gun, and kept turning northward, to our discontent.

Notwithstanding my fatigue, I found the loneliness and silence of these woods to my taste, being open and free of undergrowth. I was startled at times by the sharp crack, like a pistol-shot, of huge limbs breaking, but there was no other sound.

XXI

AT last I declared that I must camp at the first brook we met, and so kept on, stumbling, and ready to fall down with fatigue. At this time, being come some two miles farther into warm sunlight and an open glade, all the brighter for the whiteness of the snow, I came to a stand and said, "Here is our stream; let us camp." At this time Gist and I were near together, and the Indian about twenty paces away. Of a sudden he turned and fired at us. I cried out to Gist if he was shot. He said no, and we ran in on the fellow before he could load, and seized him and took his gun. Gist was for killing him at once, but this I would not allow, and we contented ourselves with taking his gun, and made him walk on in front. Gist, who was much vexed, said if we did not shoot him, which was the better way, we must contrive to fool him. At last it was agreed to pretend

we believed his excuses as to the shooting being an accident, and to let him go to his cabin. He said he knew we would never trust him further, and was pleased to be told he might go home and get some jerked venison ready, and that we would camp that night and follow his tracks in the snow at morning. We returned his gun, but took all his powder. We gave him a cake of bread, and Gist followed him until he had gone a mile. After my companion came back to me, we moved on rapidly for an hour and made a big fire, and, as it was night, took, by the light of the blaze, a course by compass, and set out, leaving, to my regret, the great warm flame behind us.

It was now clear and very cold. All night long we pushed on, now and then making a light with flint and steel to see the compass, and trying to observe the stars. We were well assured that we should be pursued, and on this account never halted the next day, and hardly spoke a word until, at evening, we came upon the Alleghany River.

There we made camp, and were up at break of day.

The ice lay out some sixty feet from the

two shores, and between were masses of ice afloat and a great flow of water. Having only one hatchet, and that not very good, we were all day contriving to build a raft. At sundown we pushed it over the shore ice and got afloat. Midway we got caught in the jam of ice-cakes, and as I pushed with my setting-pole, the swift current and a block of ice caught it, and I was cast into the deep water. I caught on to a log of the raft, and Gist giving me a hand, I crawled on to the raft. I had lost my pole, and to go to either shore was not possible, and when we drifted on to an island I was thankful enough, and the raft swept away in the flood.

Very soon Gist had a great fire burning, and by this I dried myself; but to keep warm was impossible, for the cold was the greatest I have ever known, and so intense was it that Gist would not allow me to sleep, but made me walk about, although I was ready to drop, saying if we slept and the fire should die, so should we. By good fortune there was a large jam of drifted wood on the upper end of the island, and thus we had fuel sufficient.

What with fatigue and the cold increas-

ing as the night went on, even Gist, who was of great endurance and hopeful, was concerned lest we should have been followed, and, as the island afforded small shelter, be shot from the shore. This troubled me less than to keep warm, for there was not snow enough to build a hut, than which there is no better shelter.

About ten o'clock that night we found that the river was rising, so that it would take little more to flood us. What I found worst of all was the delay. I said things could hardly be worse, but that the cold was such as would freeze the river by daylight. He said that was true, and we went back to the fire and shared a part of a flask of brandy St. Pierre gave me. Fortunately we had food enough. Gist kept me and himself awake with amazing stories of Indians and French, and of great bears. But, contrive as we could, Gist had his toes froze, and had to have them rubbed with snow to save them. I was well pleased at last to see red in the sky to eastward, and when we found the ice-cakes froze hard together we made haste to cross to the shore. There, being out of shot and the sun warmer every minute, we built another fire and ate break-

fast, and took, each in turn, an hour's sleep.

As we walked away, Gist said there was small fear of Indians either in the darkness or in great cold, for they liked neither, and he thought the cold had perhaps saved us from pursuit.

This was the case at Valley Forge in '78, when, although my soldiers suffered greatly, the snows and the cold were such as to keep Sir William Howe in his lines.

From the top of a hill, as I looked back on the river, Gist said: "You will never again, sir, be in a worse business than that, nor ever see the like again." But this I did, when, on the night before Christmas, in 1776, I crossed the Delaware in a boat with General Knox, amid as great peril of ice, on our way to beat up the Hessian quarters at Trenton.

While we were in danger, Gist had been silent; but now that we were released from anxiety and on a clear trail, he talked all the time, whether I made answer or not. I remember little of what he said, being engaged in thinking how soon I should be able to reach Williamsburg. I recall, however, his surprising me with a question as

to whether I had ever before had a man shoot at me. I said never, and having my mind thus turned to the matter, felt it to be strange that so great an escape and such nearness to death had not more impressed me. But, in fact, I had no time to think before we caught the man, and after that the great misery of the cold so distressed me that how to keep warm employed my mind.

XXII

WE were now on a good trail, and by nightfall came to the cabin of Frazier, a trader in furs; and this was where the Turtle Creek falls into the Monongahela. Here I wrote up my diary.

As there was hope of packhorses coming hither which might be used on our return, I waited, pleased to be fed and warmed, but hearing bad news of massacres by the Ottawas. Near by I visited the Queen Aliquippa, and made her presents of a matchcoat and a bottle of rum I had of the trader, asking, too, her advice as to the Indians, all of which pleased her mightily.

I was surprised to find a woman with rule over Indians, but she was said to be wise in council. I never heard of a King Aliquippa. The queen was old and fat and as wrinkled as a frosted persimmon. She smoked a pipe and had a tomahawk in her belt, and I did not think she would

be a comfortable partner in the marriage state.

At last, as we failed at this place to get horses after a three days' rest, we left on foot, January 1, reaching Gist's home on the Monongahela, a sixteen-mile tramp. There I left Gist, and, buying a horse, pushed on, passing packhorses carrying stores for the new fort begun at the Forks.

I had no more appetite for adventure, and was glad to reach Williamsburg on January 16, 1754, where I delivered my sealed reply, and conveyed to the governor my views, and remembrance of what I had seen and heard, with maps I had made and drawings of the forts.

Looking back from the hilltop, as General Hamilton once said to me, must often surprise a man with knowledge of mistakes made by the way; but considering this journey from the summit of years, I seem to have done as well as so young a man might.

Van Braam, who came in later, told me that the elder French officers were rather amused that a boy should be sent on an errand which might bring about a war. I think it was their imprudent indifference which left me free to observe all I wished

to learn which might bear upon military action in the future. It appeared to me that they felt so secure of their own power as to be altogether careless.

I proposed to myself on starting to be as full of wiles as the Indians, and to be very careful as to what I said to them and to the French. I perceive to-day that my disposition to look down on the Indians was a mistake, and that I had been wiser to have treated the Half-King more as an equal. My disposition to be what is called diplomatic with the French in command was needless, for the commander was very frank. I have learned, as years went by, that in treating with men or nations the simplest way is the best.

The answer made to the governor was plain enough. The Frenchmen were there to obey orders, and meant to hold the lands. They would, of course, send our summons to Marquis Duquesne. The chevalier said in his despatch polite words of me, which I still recall with satisfaction, for I have never been insensible to the approbation of men, and the words of the courteous French officer were not lost upon me.

The governor thought, and so did his

council, that the answer was evasive and was meant to gain time. It seemed to me remarkably straightforward, and I was sure that in the spring they would descend the Ohio and take possession. I had to prepare my report hastily in two days, which was printed and distributed through the colonies. It appears to me, as I read it over, to have been well done for so young a man, with no time allowed to correct and improve the language. I am more surprised, as I now read it, that I should have had the good sense to see, as the French engineers saw later, that where the Monongahela and Alleghany join was the best place for a fort, and a better than where the Ohio Company intended.

It seems strange to me, as I look back on this time, to see what share I, but a young man, had in the historical events of the day. My report was not only read throughout the colonies, but in England and even in France, so that at this time, and again soon after, my name became known both among ourselves and on the other side of the ocean, although the matters in which I was engaged were in themselves, to appearance, of little moment. To be so widely spoken of

was not then unpleasant, and the less so because it was a source of gratification to my friends.

I had been through the winter wilderness and delivered the hostile message of the King's governor. It was seemingly no great matter. But as I reflect, I perceive that whatever I did then or later gave me such importance in the eyes of men as led on to my being considered for the greater tasks of life. Mr. J ——, who much disliked General H——, once wrote of him that he was like a pawn in the game of chess, and was pushed on by mere luck, until he suddenly found himself on the far line of the board with the powers of royalty. This was said with bitterness not long ago, when I insisted he should command under me, at the time we were threatened with a French war. I am not, however, of the opinion that good fortune alone presides over the destinies either of men or nations, for often in after days I have had cause to believe that an intending Providence was concerned in the events of the great war.

As soon as I had made an end of my business with the governor, I visited my mother, and thence rode to Mount Vernon.

There I found Lord Fairfax, and was pleased to be rested and to hear his lordship speak well of my conduct of a difficult affair. When we were alone next day on horseback, he rode long in silence, as was his way. When he spoke he said: "George, I have sent for copies of your report to send to my friends in England. It is well done. I am pleased that you would not talk much of it last night to Colonel Willis and Mr. Warner. The men who do not talk about themselves are the most talked about by others. Silence often insures praise." Indeed, even thus early and since, I have been averse to speak of what I had done. I replied that I should remember his lordship's advice, upon which he went on to talk of the chances of war with France. I was not left long idle.

XXIII

THE governor was now fully decided to resist the French aggressions, and convened the House of Burgesses after much delay. I was offered full command of a force of three hundred men in six companies, forming a regiment. I consulted his lordship and my half-brother Augustine as to this, and not feeling secure of my fitness for so great a position, and they agreeing, I chose rather to serve as second under Colonel Frye. This being settled, I went about the business of recruiting as lieutenant-colonel.

In considering the new duty to which I was called and what it led me to do, I have asked myself whether I could have done it better, considering the want of supplies and of sufficiency of men.

Mr. John Langdon at one time wrote to me, when commenting on the character of General A——, that what he had been as

a very young man he continued to be ever after, and that, although education and opportunity might give a man of strong character the tools for his purposes, they would not seriously alter his nature; he would only be more and more that which he had been.

As I sit in judgment upon the particulars which occasioned the affair at Great Meadows, and later my disaster at Fort Necessity, I am inclined to believe that I could have done no better at fifty than I did at twenty-two. I perceive also that the conditions which at that time surrounded and embarrassed me were on a lesser scale the same as those with which I had to struggle in the later and more important days, which made me old before my time. Such comparisons as these do not readily occur to me, as I am inclined to dwell most upon the needs of the present and upon the possibilities which the future may have in store.

On one occasion, during the march to Yorktown, when bivouacked at the head of the Elk, Colonel Scammel and Lieutenant-Colonel Hugh Wynne, both at that time of my military family, led me into expressing myself as to these earlier events, and one of

them, Lieutenant-Colonel Wynne, I think, remarked that I had then to encounter the same kind of obstacles as those which had perplexed me at the Valley Forge and Morristown, and indeed throughout the War of Independency. I did not encourage such further discussion by these young officers as might readily lead on to the impropriety of criticisms upon Congress. But now, recalling what was then said, I am led to see how remarkably alike were the conditions I had to meet at two periods of my life. Nor can I fail to observe that what General Hamilton liked very often to call "the education of events" was valuable in teaching me moderation and such control of temper as I was to need on a larger field.

While I went about my military preparations, the governor and the House wrangled over the ten thousand pounds he asked for the fitting out of troops. I have observed that men engaged in agriculture as the masters of slaves acquire a great independence of thought and are hard to move to a common agreement even when, as at that time, there is an immediate need for united action.

There was also much distrust of Gover-

nor Dinwiddie, and indeed we rarely submitted with entire good will to any of the royal governors. He got his grant at last, but a committee was to confer with him as to how it was to be used—a measure not altogether unwise, but which made him swear we were getting to be too republican and, he feared, would be more and more difficult to be brought to order.

As to my recruiting, the better men were indisposed to join, and I got chiefly a vagabond crew of shoeless, half-dressed fellows, but most of them hunters and good shots. I did better when the governor offered a bounty in land, which as yet we had not, for it was to be about the fine bottoms at the Forks of the Ohio, which were in the hands of the French and the Indians.

I made Van Braam a captain, and thereafter obtained more men and better, for the old warrior promised, I fear, an easy time and all manner of agreeable rewards, with such accounts of the lands they were to have as much delighted the hard-working farmers' sons.

On April 2 I left Alexandria, with orders to secure tools and build roads, for Colonel

Frye to follow me with the artillery and a greater force.

In what I was thus set to do I knew I was to have difficulty, and this it was hard to make Governor Dinwiddie understand, nor do I think he or our rulers in England could form any idea of the country to be traversed, even up to the Forks of the Ohio. From our outlying farms westward to the Mississippi was a great forest land with savannas, and beyond the Ohio vast meadows where buffalo grazed. Through our own hills there were old Indian trails, and as far as to the Ohio were horse-paths used by the traders and their men. There were also many crossing-trails made by horned game to reach water, and apt to mislead any but men accustomed to the woods. Very few knew this mighty wilderness, nor was it easy to make persons unused to the woods comprehend the obstacles and risks an army would find on traversing them with waggons and artillery.

As I have said, I had long ago fixed upon the Forks of the Ohio as an excellent station for a fort. The French were also of this opinion, and in their hands it became

at last Fort Duquesne, and in 1759 was lightly given up by them to General Forbes. At this earlier date our governor, resolving to take my advice, made choice of Captain Trent to build a fort at the Forks, where we prepared to follow and support him. Having failed on a former and easier errand, it was foolish to have expected better things of this man in a more difficult matter. He was given only fifty men, as it was supposed he would not be attacked.

While I was on my way to Wills Creek from Winchester, Contrecœur dropped down-stream from Venango with a great force and took the half-finished fort, Captain Trent being absent at the time. I was near to Wills Creek when I learned of this disaster. Colonel Frye and other detachments were to follow me, but I saw that we were now in a way to be devoured in bits by the larger French forces. Everything I needed was lacking. I had been cursed along the border for my taking of waggons, horses, and food, and when I would have picks, shovels, and axes, it was worse.

I heard while here from Mr. Fairfax, desiring me not to neglect having divine service in the camps for the benefit of the

Indians. I did on one occasion, but as Davidson told me they considered it some form of incantation, I did not repeat it. I had also a letter from my mother, meant to have found me earlier. It seemed strange amid anxieties like mine to be asked to send her a good Dutch servant and, if I remember correctly, four pounds of good Dutch butter. I had far other business.

At the Ohio Company's post at Wills Creek, nothing was ready; only Captain Trent, full of excuses for the failure of horses and boats, and much cast down at the news of the loss of the fort. I sent back for waggons and horses sixty miles to Winchester, and waited as patiently as I could.

On April 23 came the men of Trent's party, released by the French. The ensign, Mr. Ward, was the only officer with them, and to surrender was all he could do. He told me of hundreds of Chippewas and Ottawas coming to join Contrecœur, and of another force descending the Ohio. To add to my troubles, Trent's men were disorderly, making my men uneasy by their stories.

At this time I was decently housed in a

small log hut, and here, retiring by myself, I fell to thinking of what I had heard and what I ought to do. The situation demanded serious consideration, but also speedy action.

XXIV

I HAD been sent forward to build bridges, to corduroy swamps for the cannon, and to make roads. I was not to bring on hostilities, but I was to assert the King's title and, at need, to resist the French. The orders were well fitted to get me into trouble, but the capture of Trent's fort and men somewhat aided my decision, for this was an act of open war. While thus occupied, a runner fetched me letters, and among them one from Lord Fairfax.

As adjutant of the Northern Division since I was nineteen, I was prepared for much that his lordship's letter conveyed, but it went in some respects beyond what I then knew or was prepared for, and, I may add also, much beyond the views which his lordship came later to entertain, when men were obliged to elect as between loyalty to the King and disloyalty to human rights.

This letter now before me runs as follows:

Greenway Court.

MY DEAR GEORGE: Yours received from Alexandria, and thank you for the attention when you were so busily engaged. I am always pleased to be acquainted with anything to your advantage, and was gratified at your being chosen to be of the force. I desire you, however, to understand that your worst enemies will not be the French, or the fickle Indians, but those in the rear.

There is of late years a great desire for freedom in all the colonies, and men are disposed to dispute the too royal sense of prerogative on the part of the governors. Whenever, as now, money is to be voted, the houses in the several colonies are apt to use the occasion to dispute it, and to bargain for something else as a reward for their grant of supplies. The withholding of money has been the chief means of governing kings by our own Commons. I blame it not. But this present reluctance is without cause—foolish, and at a wrong season. As to the difficulty of disciplining our people you know enough, and will know more; but they will always fight, which may console for other defects. The want of an organized commissary you will feel of a surety, but less than with regulars, who do not know as do our people how to

diet their English bellies, or how to forage at need on wood and river. Prepare, too, for desertion and drunkenness, which is the curse of the land. But I must forbear, lest I discourage you, although that I consider not to be easy. I would that you smoked a pipe. It confers great equanimity in times of doubt, and the Indians hold it to be helpful in council; for while a man smokes he cannot discourse, and thus must needs obtain time for sober reflection, for which reason it would be well that women took to the pipe, a custom which would greatly conduce to comfort in the condition of armed neutrality known as the married state. Charles Sedley once said in my company that the pipe was the bachelor's hearth, and I have found it a good one. Indeed, my dear George, when I reflect upon the many statues of worthless kings and the monuments to scoundrels in graveyards where the dead lie and the living lie about them, I am inclined to set up a fine memorial at Greenway Court to the unknown Indian who invented this blessing of the Pipe. He must have been a great genius.

Wishing you the best of luck, and that I were young enough to be with you, I am,

Yours,
Fairfax.

P. S. You will at some time have to serve with regulars or with colonial officers appointed by the crown. Your sense of justice and of what

is due to a gentleman will, I am assured, revolt at the want of parity in pay and at other claims to outrank gentlemen of the colonies serving in the militia. As to this I counsel moderation and endurance. Your first duty must be to the crown.

F.

It was raining heavily as I sat that night and considered what I should do. To fall back I had no mind. I had been set to the slow work of preparing roads, and had made them up to the west branch of the Youghiogheny, about four miles a day, and here meant to make a bridge. As I sat in the log cabin alone, deciding what next to do, came in Van Braam with a warning from the Half-King, and, just after, a trader who had been driven out by the French and who told me that a force sent from Duquesne was at least eight hundred in number. This I was sure could not be the case, and until I knew more I could not decide what to do. I asked to be alone, and with a candle and a rude map considered the situation. I concluded that the French would make no considerable move forward until they had made secure the excellent position they had taken from Trent. I was of opinion they would meanwhile send out small parties to scout.

After a council with my officers, we resolved to go on to fortify a post of the Ohio Company at Redstone Creek, near the Monongahela, and after sending back urgent letters we set out, doing the best we could as to the road. On May 9, at Little Meadows, we were met by many traders, driven in by the French, with tales which much discouraged my men—in all some two hundred; and still I pushed on to the Youghiogheny, and there kept the men busy with the bridging of it. Leaving them occupied in this manner, I explored the Youghiogheny for a better way by water than over the hills, but found it impracticable, and so came back to do as best I could with the road over the mountains.

That night I was again called on for a decision. I remember I walked to and fro, considering how it was but an outpost, with nothing near in the way of succour, and before me the French and the wilderness.

Van Braam, whom I had sent out to scout, had before this appeared, bringing news that, eighteen miles below, the French were crossing by a ford, their number unknown; also that several of our men had deserted and that there was much uneasiness in the camp. I was myself quite un-

easy enough. Many times since I have been in as doubtful and perilous situations, where the fate of an empire was concerned, but then I have had with me officers of distinction. I was alone, hardly more than a boy, and surrounded by men who were becoming alarmed.

I said to Van Braam that we must not be caught here, but that I would not fall back very far. The old trooper smiled, and I confess to having been pleased by this sign of approval. My mind was made up not to return to the settlements except before an overwhelming force.

XXV

ON May 23, six more men being gone away, I retreated to Great Meadows, a wide, open space free of large trees, a charming place for an encounter, and here I cleared the ground of bushes, began a log fort, and prepared to remain until I heard further. This I did very soon, for Gist, the trader, came in on the 25th of May with news of my old acquaintance, La Force, having been at his camp, at noon the day before, with some fifty men, and one, De Jumonville, in command. They were foolish enough not to hold Gist, for he got off and warned me of their being not five miles from us. They had been sending runners back to Contrecœur, and what were their intentions Gist did not know. That night I got news of my doubtful Half-King, who promised help if I would attack this party.

Whatever indecision I have had in my life of warfare has been due to a too great respect for the opinions of other officers, and

very often I had done better to have gone my own way. All day long I had been in the melancholic state of mind which at times all my life has troubled me. I remember that the news from Gist of this prowling band so near as five miles, and the word sent by the Half-King, at once put to rout my lowness of mind. Usually young officers go into their first battle under more experienced guidance, and I now wonder at the confidence with which I set out, for some of my officers were clear against it.

I felt sure that De Jumonville would attack me if I retreated, or, if I let him alone, would wait for further help and orders from Contrecœur before making an end of my little party. That I was to strike openly the forces of the King of France did not disturb me, after their seizure of our fort at the Forks.

When I told Van Braam and Gist what I meant to do, the former approved, but Gist would have had me retreat to Wills Creek. I said no; we would surely be ambushed, and the men were deserting.

Having given my orders, I tied an extra pair of moccasins to my belt, and taking no gun myself, set out at 10 P.M., leaving

behind me a baggage-guard. I took with me forty men, the best I had, and mostly good shots. The Half-King and a few warriors in full war-paint met me at a spring some two miles away.

His scouts had found the French in a rocky valley, where they had cleared a space and evidently meant to await orders or reinforcements.

The rain was pouring down in torrents, the worst that could be, when we met the Half-King. We halted in the darkness of the forest while my interpreter let me know the situation of De Jumonville, which seemed to me to be well chosen as a hiding-place, but ill contrived for defence. After this we pushed on, the Indian guides being ahead. Several times they lost their way. We stumbled on in the wet woods, falling against one another, so dark was the night, and crawling under or over the rotten trees of a windfall. I was both eager and anxious, and kept on in front, or at times fell back to silence my men. We were moving so slowly that my anxiety continually increased, and I had constantly to warn my men to keep their flint-locks dry.

At last, toward dawn of day, we came

where we could look down on the camp. The wind being in our faces, we had smelt the smoke of their fires a quarter of a mile away, and now and then, even at this distant day, the smell of the smoke from wet wood smouldering in the rain recalls to my mind this night, a fact which appears to me singular. To my joy, the camp was silent and there were no sentinels. I halted the men, and my orders were whispered down the trail for them to scatter to the right while the Indians moved to the left. After giving time for this, I moved out alone from the shelter of the rocks and trees. As I did so, a man came from a hut and gave a great shout. At once the French were out with their arms and began to fire, but had no cover. Some of my own men were practised Indian-fighters and kept to the shelter of the trees, moving from trunk to trunk and firing very deliberately. I heard the enemy's bullets whizz around me, and felt at once and for the first time in war the strange exhilaration of danger. A man fell at my side, and I called to those near me to keep to the trees, but did not myself fall back, feeling it well to encourage my men.

For a little while the firing was hot. It lasted, however, but fifteen minutes. Then I saw an officer fall, and they gave up and cried for quarter as I ran down into their camp to stop the Indians from using their tomahawks and killing the wounded.

Van Braam told me afterwards that I exposed myself needlessly, but I thought this was necessary in order to give spirit and confidence to men who were many of them new to battle.

Our loss was small and that of the French great, since De Jumonville, who was in command, and ten men were killed and twenty-two taken, with some others hurt.

I remember to have written my brother Jack of this little fight, that the whistle of the bullets was pleasing to me; but I was then very young, and it was, after all, but a way of saying that the sense of danger, or risk, was agreeable.

On our way back through the woods I talked to La Force, who was in no wise cast down and told me that I should pay dear for my success, and how innocent they were, and a fine string of lies.

I was very well pleased to have caught this fellow, one of the most wily and trou-

blesome half-breeds on the frontier, and a fine maker of mischief, as he had been when I was on my way to the lake.

After the fight we found, on the person of De Jumonville and in his hut, papers amply proving his hostile intention, although even without this evidence his hiding so long in our neighbourhood, and sending out runners to Fort Duquesne, sufficiently showed what my party had to expect when the French would be reinforced.

After the fight it was thought prudent to return as soon as possible, so, to my regret, I had to leave the dead, both our own and the French, without decent burial. This I believe they had later at the hand of De Villiers. Although the fugitives were nearly all taken, one or two escaped and took the news to Contrecœur, at the Forks of the Ohio. I sent my prisoners to Williamsburg under a strong guard, having previously supplied M. Drouillon, a young officer, and La Force with clothes of my own out of the very little I had. I remember that I was amused when Drouillon, a pert little fellow, complained that my shirt was too big for him. Indeed, it came down near to his ankles.

I asked of the governor in a letter such respect and favour for these persons as was due to gentlemen placed in their unfortunate condition. Neither of them seemed to me to have been aware of the character of their commander's orders. To my regret, the request I made to Governor Dinwiddie received small consideration, as I may have to relate. I was of opinion, however, that La Force should not be set free too soon, because of his power to influence the Indians.

XXVI

THE action with De Jumonville took place on May 28, and the Half-King, although disappointed as to scalps, went away, promising to return with many warriors. He told me his friends the English had now at last begun in earnest, but that it was no good war to keep prisoners.

As I trusted him more than most of the Indians, I sent thirty men and some horses to assist in moving the Indian families, for without them the warriors would never return; and I did not neglect to send a runner back to hasten Mackay, who was in command of an independent company from South Carolina. They were indeed quite independent, having neither good sense nor discipline, as I was soon to discover. My little skirmish with the French on May 28 added to my perplexities the knowledge that as soon as the runners who escaped should reach the fort at the Forks Contrecœur

would undertake to avenge the loss of his officer.

While I was impatiently waiting supplies from Croghan at Wills Creek, for now we were six days without flour, came news that Colonel Frye, my commander, was dead at that post. Colonel Innes of North Carolina, who was to succeed him in the whole command, lay at Winchester with four hundred men; but as he continued to lie there, neither he nor his troops were of any use in the campaign.

During the period which elapsed between my fight on May 28 and my being attacked on July 3, being now a colonel, and sure of soon being reinforced, I made haste to complete the fort at Great Meadows.

There I had excellent help from Captain Stobo and Mr. Adam Stephen, whom I made captain, and who, long after, became a general and served under me in the great war.

It was only a log work we built, near to breast-high, with no roof, one hundred feet square, with partitions, and surrounded at some distance by a too shallow ditch and palisadoes. Captain Stobo gave to this defence the name of Fort Necessity, and said

that the name was suggested by his empty belly, for indeed we were at this time half starved.

Near about this time came three hundred men from Wills Creek, and, to my satisfaction, my friend Dr. Craik, who was of a merry disposition, and kept us in good humour, besides what aid he gave us as a physician, and I never had the service of a better.

On the 9th of June arrived my old military teacher, Adjutant Muse, with other men, nine swivels, and a very small supply of ammunition. He fetched with him a wampum belt and presents and medals for the Indians, as I had desired of the governor.

At this time, in order to secure the Indians, who are fickle and must always be bribed, we had a fine ceremony, and I delivered a speech sent from the governor.

Dr. Craik gave me, two years ago, the account he wrote home of this occasion, and I leave it in this place for the time, since it serves to record matters of which I have no distinct remembrance, and is better wrote than it would have been by me.

My dear Anne: To-day, before we move on, I send you a letter by a runner who returns to hasten our supplies. We had a great ceremony to-day. A space in the meadows near the fort was cleared, and all our men set around under arms in a great circle. In the middle stood the Colonel, very tall and, like all of us, very lean for lack of diet, for we are all shrunk like persimmons in December. Before him were seated the Half-King and the son of Aliquippa, the Queen of one of the tribes. Last year our Colonel gave her a red match-coat and a bottle of rum, and now she is his great friend and waiting for more favours, especially rum.

The warriors were painted to beat even a London lady, and no bird has more feathers or finer. The pipe of Council was passed around, and all took a few whiffs. When it came to the turn of our Colonel, he sneezed and coughed and made a wry face, but none of the Indians so much as smiled, for they are a very solemn folk. I could not refrain to laugh, so hid my face in the last handkerchief I possess. There are holes in it, too. Then we had the Indian's speech and that the Governor sent to be spoken. After this the Colonel hung around the necks of the Chiefs medals of silver sent from England. One had the British lion mauling the Gallic cock, and on the other side the

King's effigy. Then the drums were beat, and the son of Aliquippa was taken into Council as a sachem, and given, as is the custom, a new name. I suppose it is a kind of heathen Christening. He was called Fairfax. I hope his Lordship will look after his Godson, or devil son, as he is more like to be. The Half-King was made proud with the name of Dinwiddie, and so we are friends until to-morrow, and allies—I call them *all lies.* After this the Colonel read the morning service, which I hope pleased them. They believed he was making magic.

This is a good account, and I certainly did make a face with the tobacco-smoke, for, although at that time I raised the weed, I cannot endure it.

Captain Mackay arrived on the 7th of June, but it came about untowardly that the company which thus joined me was not Virginian, and gave me more trouble than help. I may be wrong concerning the date of Captain Mackay's arrival, but he was with us when, on the 10th of June, I moved out of our fort to prepare the road for the larger attempt proposed to take the defences at the Forks of the Ohio. I soon found that I was to have difficulty

with this officer. I found him a good sort of a gentleman, but, as he had a distinct commission from the King, he declined to receive my commands, and, I found, would rather impede the service than forward it. I have made it a rule, however, to do the best I can in regard to obstacles I cannot control, and so I kept my temper and was always civil to this gentleman, even when he would not permit his men, unless paid a shilling a day, to assist in the making of roads.

As two masters are worse in an army than anywhere else, he agreed willingly enough to remain at Fort Necessity, while I went on toward Redstone Creek with my Virginians to better my road. It was a hard task, and at night the men were so tired that the scouts and sentries could hardly keep awake. The Indians came in daily, asking presents, and were mostly spies.

At Gist's old camp, thirteen miles from Great Meadows, I learned that Fort Duquesne had been reinforced and that I was to be attacked by a large force. I sent back for Mackay, and at once called in all my hunters and scouting-parties. When Cap-

tain Mackay arrived we held a council and resolved that we had a better chance to defend ourselves at Fort Necessity. The officers gave up their horses to carry the ammunition, and we began a retreat with all possible speed. The weather was of the worst, very hot and raining, and the Carolina men, who called themselves king's soldiers, would give no assistance in dragging the swivels. What with hunger and toil, my rangers were worn out when, on July 1, we were come back to the fort. I was of half a mind to push on and secure my retreat to Wills Creek; but the men refused to go on with the swivels, and the few horses we had were mere bone-bags, and some of them hardly fit to walk.

I turned over the matter that night with Captains Mackay and Stephen, and resolved, for, indeed, I could do no better, to send for help and abide in the fort. I was well aware that to retreat would turn every Indian on the frontier against us, and I was in good hope to hold out.

If, as I wrote the governor, the French behaved with no greater spirit than they did in the Jumonville affair, I might yet come off well enough if provisions reached

me in time, and I thought with proper reinforcements we should have no great trouble in driving them to the devil and Montreal.

On the evening of July 1 an Indian runner came in. He had been with De Villiers and a force from Duquesne. He told me that when that officer reached Gist's palisado he fired on it, but, finding no one there, was of a mind to go back, thinking I had returned to the settlements. Unfortunately, some of our Indians, who were now leaving us in numbers, told him I meant to make a stand at Fort Necessity.

Whether I should fall back farther or not was now a matter for little choice. If I retreated with tired, half-starved men and no rum for refreshment, De Villiers's large, well-fed force and quick-footed Indians would surely overtake us, and we should have to meet superiour numbers without being intrenched. If Captain Mackay and his men, in my absence, had done anything to complete my fort, I should have fared better. Meanwhile we might be aided with men from Winchester, or, at least, be provisioned. I said nothing to the South Carolina officer of his neglect, for that would

do no good, and I desired when it came to fighting he should be in a good humour.

News seemed to fly through the forests as if the birds carried it, and I was not surprised to learn before I got to the fort that the Half-King and nearly all his warriors had stolen away. He was out of humour with the officers I had left in charge and said no one consulted him. I think he desired to escape a superiour force and to assure the safety of his squaws and papooses, whom I was not ill pleased to be rid of, but not of the warriors.

After my men were fed, Captain Stobo, Adjutant Muse, Captain Stephen, and I took off our coats and went to work to help with axes, Dr. Craik very merry and cheering the poor fellows, who were worn out with work.

We raised the log shelter a log higher, and dug our ditch deeper, and, had we had more time, had done better to have enlarged the fort, for it was quite too small for the force.

XXVII

ON the evening of July 2, I went over the place with Captain Stobo. We were in the middle of a grassy meadow about two hundred and fifty yards wide, and no wood nearer than sixty yards. Stobo would have had us cut down the nearer trees, but the rangers could work no more. As to men, I had enough, if I had been supplied with ammunition and food.

The next day being the 3d, this was tried —I mean the clearing away of trees; but about half-past ten I heard a shot in the woods on that side where the ground rises, and at once all the men hurried in, as was beforehand agreed, and a sentry ran limping out of the woods, wounded. Next came our scouts in haste to say the French and Indians, a great force, were a mile away, eight hundred it was thought. At eleven I saw them in the forest on the nearest rise of ground, well under cover. I left Captain

Mackay in the fort, and set my rangers in the ditch, fairly covered by the earth cast up in the digging of it, hoping the enemy would make an assault. But they kept in the woods and fired incessantly. About 4 P.M. it came on to rain very heavy, with thunder and lightning. So great was the downfall that the water flowing into the ditch half filled it, and the pans and primings of the muskets got wetted, and our fire fell off. Seeing this, I drew the men within the palisadoes and the log fort, where they were favourably disposed to resist an attack, for which the enemy seemed to have no stomach. This was near about 5 P.M., and soon, to my dismay, shots began to fall among us from the Indians, who climbed the trees and thus had us at an advantage.

Many men began to drop, and De Peyronney, a Huguenot captain, was badly wounded, while our own shooting, because of the torrent of rain, was much slackened, and at dusk our ammunition nearly all used. Twelve men were killed and forty-three wounded out of the three hundred rangers, but how many out of the Independent company I do not know, nor was the loss of the enemy ever ascertained.

About 7 P.M., seeing that we had almost ceased to fire, the French called a parley, which I declined; but at eight, knowing our state and that we had scarce any provisions left, I answered their second flag that I would send an officer, and for this errand would have ordered De Peyronney, who spoke the French tongue, but that he was hurt and in great pain. I had no one but Van Braam who knew any French. He went, and returned with demands for a capitulation so dishonourable that I could not consider them. At last, however, we came to terms, which were to march out with all the honours of war, Van Braam and Captain Stobo volunteering to go as hostages for the return of Drouillon and La Force.

It was eleven o'clock at night and very dark when Van Braam translated the final terms of capitulation. We were to march away unmolested and to agree not to build forts or occupy the lands of his Most Christian Majesty for a year; but to this vague stipulation I did not object. It was raining furiously, and we heard the terms read by the light of one candle, which was put out by the rain, over and over, as Van Braam,

with no great ease, let me hear what, he declared, was set down. Unhappily, he translated the words which twice made me agree to be taken as the *assassin* of De Villiers's brother, Jumonville, so as to read that the French had come to revenge the *death* of that gentleman, and understanding it, with Stephen and Mackay, to mean this and no more, I signed the paper and thus innocently subjected myself to a foul calumny.

At dawn we moved out with one swivel and drums beating and colours flying. This was on July 4. I was reminded of it when, on July 9, 1776, I paraded the army to announce that on July 4 the Congress had declared that we were no longer colonies but free and independent States. Then I remembered the humiliation of the morning when we filed away before those who were to become our friends and allies.

I bade good-by to Van Braam and Stobo, and we began our homeward march, all on foot, because of our horses having been taken when we were forced to leave them outside of the fort. We had gone scarce a mile, carrying our wounded on rude litters, when, against all the terms agreed upon,

the Indians followed and robbed the rear baggage, misusing many. Upon this, showing a bold front, I drove them off, and destroying all useless baggage, set out again.

Some died on our way, others fell out and were no more heard of; and thus, half starved and weary, we made the seventy miles to Wills Creek.

Having conducted my command to this point, where was all they required in the way of clothing and supplies, I rode with Captain Mackay to Williamsburg.

I felt for a time and with much sharpness the sense of defeat, and I heard later that Captain Mackay complained that I was dull company on the ride, which was no doubt true enough, for I felt that he and his command were partly to be blamed.

Indeed, I appeared to myself at this time the most unfortunate of men; but I have often been led to observe that we forget our calamities more easily than the pleasures of life, nor on the occasion here described could I so much reproach myself as those who had failed to supply me with the ammunition and provisions required for success.

Although it was near to nine at night when we rode into Williamsburg and put up at the Raleigh Tavern, I went at once to the house called the governor's palace, but much inferiour in size and convenience to the fine houses of Westover and Brandon. The governor being gone to supper elsewhere, I gave the sealed package containing the capitulation, all in French, with the signatures of De Villiers and myself, to the governor's aide.

In the morning I called upon the governor and was cordially received. He said that we could not go into the details of the capitulation until the articles of it were fairly Englished. This would require a day. He made rather too light, I thought, of the surrender and of what seemed to me serious; for to my mind the French were come to stay.

While the governor was assuring me that we should easily drive out the invaders, my kinsman, Colonel Willis of the council, joined us. He considered the situation on the frontier as very grave, and succeeded in alarming the governor, a man of confident and very sanguine disposition. At last Colonel Willis turned to me and said:

"George, I dare venture to engage that this little fire you have left blazing will set the world aflame."

After further talk I left them. I had been before this in the capital of the colony, but always for a brief visit. Now, having time, I walked down the broad Duke of Gloucester street, and saw the famous William and Mary College. There were many fine houses and the handsome parish church of Bruton, said to have been planned by the great Sir Christopher Wren.

XXVIII

THE next morning about nine came Mr. William Fairfax to the inn and said: "There is some trouble about the capitulations, but I do not know what. You are wanted at once by the council."

Upon this I made haste to reach the palace, wondering what could be the matter.

In the council-chamber were several gentlemen standing, in silence—Mr. Speaker Robinson, Colonel Cary, and my Lord Fairfax, as I was pleased to see, he having arrived that morning to be a guest of Governor Dinwiddie. There were also others, all standing in groups, but who they were I fail now to remember. All of them appeared to be serious as I went in, and there was, of a sudden, silence, except that the governor, a bulky man, very red in the face and of choleric temper, was walking about cursing in a most unseemly way. Lord Fairfax alone received me pleasantly, com-

ing forward to greet me, but no one else did more than bow. The governor came toward me, and holding the capitulations in one hand, struck them with the other hand and cried out: "Explain, sir—explain how you, sir, an officer of the King, came to admit over your signature that you were an assassin, and twice, sir, twice. I consider you disgraced."

Lord Fairfax laid a hand on my arm to stay me and said:

"Your Excellency, it is not the manner among us to condemn a man unheard; nor, sir, to address a gentleman as you have permitted yourself to do."

Colonel Cary said: "That, sir, is also my own opinion." For this I was grateful, because on a former occasion he had himself been lacking in civility.

Then my cousin Willis came across the room and said very low: "Keep yourself quiet, George."

I bowed and asked to be shown the translation. I read it over with care, while no one spoke. What had been said was correct. For a moment I was too amazed to speak. As I looked up, utterly confounded, Lord Fairfax said: "Well, colonel?"

Upon this I related the facts of the case, and that Captains Mackay and Stephen had heard Van Braam translate the articles, and that he had never used the word *assassination,* but, in place of it, *death;* and that I considered it to have been ignorance on his part, and no worse.

I saw also that, while I had been given to understand by Van Braam that for a year we were pledged not to make any forts on the lands of the King of France, I had really agreed that we were not for that period to do so beyond the mountains.

When I had thus fully accounted for my misapprehension, Lord Fairfax said at once: "Then, gentlemen, this unfortunate mistake and this unlucky pledge were due to the governor's council having failed to provide Colonel Washington with a competent French interpreter." I could hardly help smiling at this transfer of the blame to the governor and his advisers. Colonel Byrd laughed outright, as the governor, with a great oath, cried out, "Nonsense, my lord," and to me, "You should be broke, sir; you are unfit to command."

Lord Fairfax said quietly, "Be careful of your words, governor." This stayed his

speech, but amid entire silence he stood shaking with anger, so that, although his wig was covered with a net, the powder fell over his scarlet coat.

Upon this I threw the capitulations on the table and, with much effort controlling myself, said: "I have explained myself to the honourable council and have no more to say."

The governor said: "I presume, sir, we must accept your statement." I replied at once, looking about me: "If any gentleman here doubts it, I—" But on this Colonel Cary said: "I do not. I think the matter cleared, Colonel Washington, and I trust that his Excellency will see that he has spoken in haste."

Lord Fairfax and Mr. Robinson also spoke to like effect, and with a degree of warmth which set me entirely at ease. The governor, much vexed to be thus taken to task, said in a surly way that he was satisfied and that Van Braam was a traitor, which I declined to believe, also adding that Captain Stephen would be asked to see the governor and confirm my statement.

After this, to my surprise, the governor desired my company at dinner, and seeing

Lord Fairfax nod to me, I accepted, but with no very good will. The matter ended with a vote of thanks from the House of Burgesses, Van Braam being left out, and also Adjutant Muse, who was considered to have shown cowardice. I was well done with a sorry business.

Indeed, but for the rain, the bad light, and that I had no reason to disbelieve what Van Braam read to us, I should have looked over the paper, where the word *assassin,* being as much English as French, must have caught my eye. What seemed to me most strange was that De Villiers should so easily have let go a man whom he professed to consider the murderer of his brother.

When we surrendered the French officers were very civil, and I saw no evidence of unusual enmity, but I do not think I met M. de Villiers.

Van Braam was very much abused and called a traitor, which I neither then nor later believed him to have been. Some few in Virginia blamed me, but since then I have lived through many worse calumnies.

As each nation was casting the blame of warlike action on the other, much was made

in France of the death of De Jumonville and the surrender of Fort Necessity.

I was able long afterwards to see the account of this capitulation at Fort Necessity as it was given by the French commander, M. de Villiers. It was quite false, but he could not have known all the facts as to De Jumonville's conduct nor how the Dutchman Van Braam—as I believe, without intention—misled me. That he was not bribed to do so is shown by the fact that, being held as a hostage, he was long kept in jail in Quebec.

It is to be remarked as worthy of note that only a month ago I should have heard news of this old soldier of fortune. A letter came to me at Mount Vernon in which Van Braam related his wanderings and how at last he had settled down in France, as it would seem, in a prosperous way. He was very flattering to his old pupil, and, for my part, I wish him good luck and a better knowledge of the French tongue than he had when we starved together at the Great Meadows.

I am also reminded as I write that Lieutenant-Colonel Wynne asked leave during the siege of Yorktown to present to me a

young French nobleman, an officer of the regiment Auvergne, whose name now escapes me. This gentleman's father had served in Canada under Marquis Montcalm, and before that on the frontier. The conversation fell upon my early service on the Ohio. To my great astonishment, the young gentleman told me that in 1759 a French writer, called, if I remember, Thomas, published a long piece in verse about this unfortunate De Jumonville in America, and how his murder was avenged. I never supposed any one would write poetry concerning me, nor do I believe it will ever happen again.

XXIX

I FIND my diaries insufficient as to the events which preceded the battle on the Monongahela, where, in Braddock's rout, I lost almost all my papers, with my plans and maps, chiefly copies of those I had given the general. This I now regret more than I did at the time when my memory served me better. Finding, as I have noted before, that to write of events recalls particulars, I shall endeavour thus to revive my personal remembrances, but not to record at length the entire history of the defeat of General Braddock.

I do not suppose that any land was ever worse governed than Virginia was under Dinwiddie, and as to military affairs worst of all, but not worse than other colonies. The governors were ignorant of warfare and expected too much from the half-trained militia and their careless officers. These conditions may have seemed to jus-

tify the King's order that all officers holding militia appointments should be outranked by all royal commissions, and even by the King's officers on half-pay. This was bad enough, but there were also Independent companies raised in time of need; and their officers, being directly commissioned by the governors acting for the King, insisted on their right to outrank gentlemen of the militia, and led the men in their commands to disobey such officers and to consider themselves of a class superiour to the militia. I had already had so sad an experience of the difficulties which arose out of these conditions that I was unwilling to submit to Governor Dinwiddie's plan of making all the militia Independent companies and with only captains in command. The object to be attained by this awkward expedient was to put a stop to the constant disputes as to precedency and command. As this would reduce me from colonel to captain, I made it clear to the governor that it was not, in my opinion, a step to be advised, but I would consider of it, which, indeed, took me no long time.

In November I resigned my commission, and before it was accepted went to Alexan-

dria, where my regiment then lay. I asked the officers to meet me and explained the cause of my being forced to resign. I was surprised to find that my resolution, which all admitted to be reasonable, met with the most flattering opposition. Indeed, I received soon after a letter from these gentlemen in which, with much more, they said:

> We, your obedient and affectionate officers, beg leave to express our great concern at the marked disagreeable news we have received of your determination to resign the command of the corps. Your steady adherence to impartial justice, your quick discernment and invariable regard to merit, enlivened our natural emulation to excel.

As this letter lies before me and I think of the emotion it caused me, I still like to remember that at the close they spoke of me as "one who taught them to despise danger and to think lightly of toil and hardships while led by a man they knew and loved."

I have been spoken of as wanting in sensibility. If it had been said I lacked means to show what I feel, that were to put the

matter more correctly. Even now the recollection of the praise thus given moves me deeply, and recalls the memory of my farewell to those who served with me in the War of Independency. I was but twenty-three when I left the colonial service.

I did so with much reluctance, for my desire was not to leave the military line, as my inclinations were still strongly bent to arms, and of this I assured Colonel Fitzhugh very plainly when he would have had me submit to return to service in the inferiour grade of captain. I preferred my farm to submitting to this degradation.

Among the minor matters which, by degrees, discontented even the most loyal of the upper class of Virginia gentlemen, none was more ill borne than the impertinence and insults to which this order of the King gave rise.

Having thus, with much regret, resigned my commission, I retired to private life at Mount Vernon and to the care of my neglected plantations.

As we had left two hostages, Van Braam and Stobo, in the hands of the French after my defeat at the Meadows, I was anxious that La Force and the French officers we

held should be treated with decency and exchanged for my two captains.

In spite of my earnest remonstrances, Drouillon and two cadets were alone offered for exchange, and La Force held in prison, which, of course, the French refused to consider. My wishes were disregarded in this matter in which I considered my honour was involved, and I was treated with the indifference the governor so often showed to the advice of colonial gentlemen of consideration. I was deeply mortified, and La Force was at least two years in jail, nor do I know what became of him. In retaliation, Van Braam and Stobo were long detained in prison by the French at Quebec, but finally got away, I do not know how. Captain Stobo, a Scotchman, I believe, was a sober, brave, and sensible man. That he was ingenious and little subject to fear appears from the fact that, while imprisoned at Fort Duquesne, he contrived a plan of the fort, and also to send it to the governor by an Indian. Had he been detected it must have cost his life.

After the fall of Quebec in 1759, I was informed by an officer that Captain Stobo made his escape before that event, and had

been able to join his Majesty's troops, and finally had guided General Wolfe on the path by which he succeeded to occupy the Plains of Abraham. I do not know what truth there was in the story.

While time ran on and I was busy with the innocent pursuits of agriculture, England and France were preparing for serious warfare, and as I heard of the efforts to be made to recover the Ohio and the forts at the North, I became troubled that I was to have no share in the business. Sir John St. Clair had come out in this year (1755) as deputy quartermaster-general, and was at once much disgusted at colonial inefficiency, and expressed himself with such freedom as gave great offence. Five weeks later, in February, I believe, General Braddock reached Williamsburg, where I then chanced to be on business concerning the purchase of bills on London. On this occasion I once more appealed to the authorities concerning Stobo and Van Braam; but although I spent some time in efforts to persuade Governor Dinwiddie that to further hold La Force was to prevent the release of two brave and innocent men, he persistently refused. Upon this I went

away, declining to discuss other matters on which he would have had my opinion.

While at Williamsburg, Colonel Peyton invited me to visit Sir John St. Clair, to whom I was able to express my regret that the conditions of the King's late order as to rank must deprive me and other colonial gentlemen of the pleasure of serving. Sir John said that he was surprised to encounter so much sensitiveness among us. To this I made no reply, but Colonel Byrd, who was present, said if Sir John would in his mind reverse our positions he would find the matter to explain itself. Sir John said that he could not imagine himself a provincial captain of border farm-hands.

Upon this Colonel Byrd rose and said there was also something which he could not imagine Sir John to be. Seeing a quarrel close at hand, a thing very undesirable when already we were on edge owing to the affectation of superiority on the part of some of Sir John's aides, I was fortunate enough to say that Colonel Byrd no doubt misunderstood Sir John, and that I never had been able to put myself in another man's place. Sir John, who had spoken hastily, was also of no mind to pro-

voke a gentleman of Colonel Byrd's influence, and said at once that he had no intention to offend, and thus the matter ended.

It was, however, this kind of thing which made so much bad blood in the colonies and was so deeply resented by men of all classes.

In the afternoon I met Colonel Byrd, who said I had spoiled a good quarrel and that he considered it would be necessary to teach some of the officers a lesson in manners. I said I hoped that at this crisis it might be avoided. I had quite forgot this incident, and am agreeably surprised, now that my memory is failing, at recovering by attention so many things which seemed lost.

On the following morning Sir John called upon me and asked would I dine with him that day, to meet General Braddock, whom, on his arrival, I had welcomed in a letter expressing my regret at being out of the service.

I was glad to meet the new commander, and at Sir John's request named several gentlemen who should have the same honour, and who might be of great use in the

campaign. On this occasion there was less heavy drinking than usual, and I was very agreeably entertained and much questioned as to the border. I promised to send my maps to the general, who, upon my taking leave, hoped some way might be found to secure my services in the coming campaign.

Indeed, I was more eager than the general, and, as occasion served, I was still more open with some of the younger members of General Braddock's family concerning my continued desire to follow the military line.

I rode homeward a day or two later, taking Fredericksburg on the way, that I might see my mother. I found her in the garden of her house, engaged in putting some plants in the ground.

She said she was pleased to see me, but did hardly look up from her work and went on talking of the family. I was of no mind to stop her, and, indeed, it was always best to let her have her say; nor did I now interrupt her, which out of respect I never inclined to do.

My sister Betty Lewis, having more desire to talk than I ever had, could never

hear my mother out, and this I did not approve, nor did it do any good.

While I was listening came a servant with a letter inclosed in a cover with a flying seal of Captain Orme's arms. The letter within carried the royal arms and "On his Majesty's service with speed," wrote large. It appeared that when I had gone, the general's aide, Captain Orme, requested Colonel Peyton to forward to me this communication, and accordingly he had sent it after me as desired. I excused myself and read it with pleasure.

My mother, being curious as to small things, and as to large ones too often indifferent, asked me what it was, and was eager to know why it bore the King's arms. I saw no better way than to let her read it.

She gave it back to me, saying, "I suppose my opinions about this business of war are never to be regarded," and more besides than I desire to recall. I replied that there was only one answer a man of honour and a loyal subject of the King could make, and that I should at once accept if time were given me to set in order my affairs; and so, with this, after much advice on her part that my duty lay at home and

on my plantation, I got away, avoiding to say more, my mind being fully made up. I find the letter now among my papers, and reading it in my old age, renew the memory of the satisfaction it gave me when young.

Williamsburg, March 2, 1755.

SIR: The General, having been informed by friends that you expressed some desire to make the campaign, but that you declined it upon some disagreeableness that you thought might arise from the regulations of command, has ordered me to acquaint you that he will be very glad of your company in his family, by which all inconveniences of that kind will be obviated.

I shall think myself very happy to form an acquaintance with a person so universally esteemed, and shall use every opportunity of assuring you how much I am

Your obedient servant,

Robert Orme,
Aide-de-camp.

I have no doubt that Colonel Peyton was the gentleman who, knowing my wishes, had suggested my appointment. I was considered by some to have been imprudent at Fort Necessity, and the governor, because

of the freedom of speech I used with him in the matter of Stobo and La Force, had for me no great regard, and was very unlikely to have favoured me with the general.

Before leaving Williamsburg, Mr. C——, a cousin of Colonel Peyton, visited me and said he had been well advised to seek my friendship in a letter from the colonel, which he thought might please me and which I was free to read. As to my appearance, wit, and judgment, the letter spoke in the most agreeable language, and added that I was destined to make no inconsiderable figure in our country. I confess to having felt, as I read it, both pleasure and doubt.

XXX

I HAD thus engaged as a volunteer, much against the wishes of my mother, who, as she said, saw no good in war and entreated me not again to expose myself to peril in the wilderness. If the French had been of her opinion as to war, I might have stayed at home. We had an unpleasant meeting, or rather parting, for she did little else but lament; but what was there I could do? I left her in tears.

I have no intention to record here the full history of this expedition, but rather to revive for my own interest what I, personally, saw, and what is nowhere else fully set down.

My appointment gave satisfaction to many friends, who felt more deeply than I myself that in the matter of commissions and as to the Villiers affair—for that was soon noised about—I had been ill treated by the governor. The favourable senti-

ments thus expressed could not, under the circumstances, be other than pleasing to a mind which had always walked a straight line and endeavoured, as far as human frankness and strong passions would allow, to discharge the relative duties to his Maker and to his fellow-countrymen without by indirect means seeking popularity.

As I pause here before making the effort to recall some of the incidents of the disastrous events in which I was to have a share, I remember with pleasure the friends who felt that my honourable invitation from a veteran general was a final answer to the censures of the King's governor.

Nor, in looking back over the greater war and my life in office, have I had reason to complain of want of affection from those whose esteem I desired to retain. Many times in my life I have, however, had just cause to complain of things said of me by those who possessed my regard, but I have in all such cases felt it better not to sacrifice a friendship on account of ill temper or the indiscretion of the hour, and am made happy in the belief that I have thus been able to keep what I would not willingly have lost. Where men have been needed in

the service or in office, I have been still more desirous of forgiving words or actions which affected me alone, but which did not in the end destroy their usefulness. Nor have I myself been without need to be thus considered, for at times I am by nature irritable and short of temper. Lawrence once said to me that he found it more easy to forgive his enemies than his friends; but this I did not clearly see, and, after all, if a man is resolved to keep himself from thinking of what is said against him, the memory of it soon becomes dulled and there is less need of forgiveness.

Among the many evidences of esteem I had before the Braddock affair was a letter from Captain Peyronney, now recovered of his wound, but to die bravely on the Monongahela. He must have heard that I had been ill spoken of by Major Muse and perhaps by others. He wrote very odd English, but I could hardly find fault with his meaning.

Sir: I Shan't make Bold to Describe the proceedings of the House [of Burgesses], which no doute you have had already Some hint of. I only will make use of these three expressions:

furtim venerunt; invane Sederunt; and *perturbate Redierunt.*

But all that is matere of indifference to the wirginia Regiment Collo. Washington will still Remain att the head of it, and I spect with more esplendor than ever; for (as I hope) notwithstanding we will Be on the British stabichment, we shall be augmented to Six houndred and by those means entitle you to the Name not only of protector of your Contry But to that of the flower of the wirginians, By the powers you 'll have in your hands to prove it So.

Many enquired to me about Muses Braveries; poor Body I h'd pity him ha'nt he had the weakness to Confes his coardies him self, and the impudence to taxe all the reste of the oficiers withoud exception of the same imperfection. for he said to many of the Consulars and Burgeses that he was Bad But th' the reste was as Bad as he:—

To speak francly had I been in town at that time I cou'nt help'd to make use of my horse's wheap for to vindicate the injury of that villain.

he Contrived his Business so that several ask me if it was true that he had challeng'd you to fight: my answer was no other But that he should rather chuse to go to hell thand doing of it, for had he had such thing declar'd: that was his Sure Road—

I have made my particular Business to tray if any had some Bad intention against you here

Below: But thank God I meet allowais with a goad wish for you from evry mouth each one entertining such Caracter of you as I have the honnour to do my Self who am the Most humble

And Obediant of your Servants

Le Chevalier de Peyronney.

I had much cause to feel grateful for such friends, and I may here add that, as concerns Van Braam, I had his censure reversed when I myself became a member of the House of Burgesses.

As soon as possible after bringing my affairs into order, I set out, determined to lose no chance to perfect my military education.

At Fredericktown I met the general, and on May 10 was announced in general orders as aide, with brevet rank of captain. I rode thence in advance to Winchester, where I had need to send a servant to borrow fresh horses from my friend Lord Fairfax, who himself came later from Greenway Court to meet me and rode with me about one hundred miles to Wills Creek, near to which was Fort Cumberland, so named for the captain-general.

On the last day of our ride, as we rode on

over, I do believe, the most abominable roads in the world, I described to his lordship the array of well-drilled men, sailors, artillery, etc., I had seen at Alexandria, landed from Admiral Keppel's fleet, and said, if I remember, that it was a great advantage to serve under a gentleman of General Braddock's abilities and experience, and that as to any danger from the enemy, I considered it as trifling, for I believed the French would be obliged to exert their utmost strength to repel the attacks about to be made on their forts at Niagara and Crown Point.

XXXI

AS I talked, Lord Fairfax, who had seen greater armies, heard me in silence, and indeed, when I ceased, remained for a time without making any comment. Then he reined up his horse, and, handing me two letters, said: "I have kept these for your private reading, George; I have them through the kindness of one of Admiral Keppel's officers." I read them as we rode on, well in the rear, to avoid the annoyance caused by the marching of the Forty-eighth Foot, which beat up a great dust. He said: "Read them again at your leisure." I did as was desired, and, as they happened to be left in my buckskin-coat pocket and forgot, they were the only papers I chanced to save in the battle. They are now before me, and I read them anew with interest. Not for many years have I seen them.

MY DEAR LORD: I take this occasion to write you. London is very gay, and the clubs and

their wits amazing merry over the appointment of Edward Braddock to command the force sent out to protect you from the Indians. Ch. S——y was here for dinner yesterday. He said General B. was a stranger both to fear and common sense, and that his best fitness to fight Indians was that he was providentially bald. Lord C. S. says he saw Anne Bellamy, the actress, whom the General visited when on the point of leaving London. She said Mr. Braddock was melancholy, and declared he was sent with a handful of men to conquer nations and to cut his way through an unknown wilderness.

He said: "We are sent like sacrifices to the altar." That ancient ram! say I. He told her she would never see him again.

I wish you luck of your new General. He is touchy, punctilious, of a stiff mind, and has had forty years in the Guards. I do not think he was eager to leave Anne Bellamy and the clubs, for the man is a favourite; but he has little money, and it will be at least agreeable to spend the king's guineas.

If you were a woman I should tell you the new fashions. The beaux now carry their watches in their muffs, and the women are taking, more and more, to what Charles S——y calls undress uniform, so that soon Madame Eve will be the fashionable maker of gowns!—but I must not nourish your provincial blushes. Lord R. tells me that your General is a sad brute, for when

his sister—a pretty thing she was—spent all her money at cards and hanged herself, the man said: "Poor Fanny, I always thought she would play till she would be forced to tuck herself up." Horace Walpole says, when she meant to die, she wrote with a diamond on the window-pane this out of Garth's "Dispensary":

> "To die is landing on some silent shore,
> Where billows never break nor tempests roar."

But why should the woman die when she had a diamond left to gamble with?

However, the Duke of Cumberland is his patron, and that is enough. F——x lost the other night at White's, they say, £1000 and—

I looked up and said: "The rest does not seem to be of interest or to say more of the general."

"No, but always look at the postscript of a lady's letter. There is more about your general."

It was true, for I read:

P.S. I meant not to tell you of Braddock's affair with Colonel Gumley, who was his friend, but I may as well, even if you think it incredible. A letter is a fine way to talk, because you can never see the blush you may cause, and may fib without being vexed by contradiction until so long after that you have forgotten all about

it. But what a pother I am making about my harmless gossip!

When Braddock quarrelled over cards with his friend, and swords were drawn, Gumley (you know, Lord Pulteney married his sister) cried out: "Braddock, you are a penniless dog. If you kill me you have no money, and you will have to run away." So with that he tossed him his purse. Braddock was in such a rage that Gumley easily disarmed him, but he would not ask his life.

As we rode on I said it seemed to me to show that our general was foolishly obstinate, and that I liked the other man better, but neither very much.

His lordship said: "Yes, yes; it is a wild and a silly life. The woman is heartless, but what she says may serve to put you on your guard. These people think London the only part of the world worth a thought. The other letter is of more moment. It is from Colonel Conway. I have inked over these names; they do not matter. He is of another clay."

London.

MY DEAR LORD: My nephew, Mr. Henry Wilton, carries this letter to you, and any kind attention you may feel disposed to pay him will oblige me.

I think the choice of Braddock unfortunate. He is a brave, or rather a reckless, man, overconfident, arrogant, and sure to despise his enemy, and goes out, as I am assured, with a bad opinion of the Colonials. Horace Walpole, who knows, as we all do, the mad life Braddock has led in London, says: "He is a very Iroquois in disposition, and so, I suppose, fit to fight his kind." Horace is making himself merry over the appointment, and the Colonial helping he is to have. But it is the fashion here to laugh at Colonials, and not for the world would Horace be out of the fashion. I wish the General may have good fortune, but I fear the matching of drill and pipe-clay against the wiles of the woods; as sensible would it be to set a fencing-master with a rapier to fight a tiger in a jungle. When I consider how vast is this increasing number of English in a country where must be great prospects and a fine sense of independency, I wonder how little they are regarded here. But it is our way to despise other nations, and even our own blood if it has had enterprise to cross the seas. Come back and help us to learn better.

Always your Lordship's
Ob'd^{t} hum^{le} serv^{t}.
Henry Conway.

His lordship looked at me as I put away the letters. I said: "That seems to me good

sense; but about the general, I cannot credit it."

"You will judge for yourself," he said, "if this be the man to send into the wilderness. Keep the letters, but do not lose them; you may return them later." Which I should have done, only that the rout on the Monongahela put it out of my mind.

XXXII

IT was about noon when, as I have said, being in the rear of the Forty-eighth Foot, we heard a noise behind us. We drew up at the side within the wood to see what was coming.

Amid a great dust came General Braddock, in a fine red chariot bought of Governor Sharpe, with an escort of light horse, all in great haste, and bumping over the worst road possible. Presently they flew by the troops, who saluted, the drums beating the Grenadier's March, a tune I was to hear again.

"If I were the general," I said, "I should have preferred a horse to a coach."

"Not if you were he," said his lordship.

"But the man is not a fool," I ventured to say. "He seemed to me not to want for intelligence."

"An intelligent fool, George, is the worst fool. His intelligence feeds his folly."

This, like much else that his lordship said to me, was not so plain as it would be now, and, accordingly, I made no reply.

After being silent for a time, his lordship went on to say that I should do well to talk little, and quietly to observe things for myself; that he himself knew General Braddock to be a spendthrift, obstinate as a pig, and very self-confident; and, finally, that I knew what a lot of drilled regulars would be worth in the woods. He feared also that the officers were quite unfit for the service.

As it was the way of his lordship to mock at most things, it did not affect me as much as what I saw and heard later, for, unfortunately, he was not alone in his opinion concerning the general.

By and by, the general having preceded us by an hour, we heard the salute of seventeen guns, fired as he entered the camp.

We came in sight of the tents about Wills Creek early in the afternoon, and were walking our horses, very tired, man and beast, when a gentleman came towards us. He was mounted on a rather uneasy animal, and I saw, as he met us and we bowed, that his girth was loose and he in danger of a fall. I dismounted and, with an apology,

set it right. He thanked me and got off his horse, saying, as was plain to see, that he was no horseman and would walk, preferring two certain legs to four uncertain ones. On this his lordship also dismounted, and, our servants taking the horses, we walked on together. But first his lordship said: "I am Lord Fairfax, and this is my friend, Colonel George Washington. May we have the honour to know your name?"

He replied, "I am Benjamin Franklin," and asked if this were Colonel Washington who had been in command in the Jumonville affair. I said I had had that good fortune, and after this he turned to his lordship, and, they conversing, I was able to observe the looks and ways of Mr. Franklin, who was now the Postmaster-General and known throughout the colonies as a learned man, and in affairs very competent. I was to be deeply engaged with him in the future.

He was at this time a vigorous man of forty-nine years, with a great head and a kindly look, clad very simply in a gray suit. When he began to talk I envied him the ease and exactness with which he expressed himself, and the prudence he showed in

speech, of which quality his lordship had little.

When at last the Postmaster-General learned that I was to serve as a volunteer aide, he smiled and remarked that that was to manufacture glory for others and not even to get pay. To this I replied that I considered my ends were clear enough to me, for that I was, as it were, an apprentice, and was bent to acquire experience in war under one who knew the business. He said he hoped I should not be disappointed, and at this I saw his lordship smile; and so no more of moment passed between us, for we met Captain Orme and Sir John St. Clair, and were soon in the camp.

Here was our most western fort. It lay very well, what there was of it finished, just where Wills Creek falls into the Potomac.

I went, with Captain Orme guiding me, to headquarters at the fort to report, passing a few Indians and squads of ill-clad Virginians whom an officer, one Ensign Allen, was cursing and trying to drill into regulars.

Everybody was out of temper for one reason or another. Sir John could get

neither waggons nor flour, and the Indian squaws were making mischief because of the unchecked license of the younger officers.

Having reported, I was received very agreeably by the general and his aides, and he would have me to dine with him that day. At four in the afternoon—for the general kept very fashionable hours—we sat down in a great room in the fort, and as he told us his cooks could make a good ragout out of old boots, we were served with a great variety of dishes, and in fine state.

The general had Lord Fairfax on his right and Mr. Franklin on his left, and I was fortunate to find myself beside a very courteous gentleman just come to the fort, Mr. Richard Peters, secretary of Governor Morris of Pennsylvania. I engaged this gentleman in talk concerning the proprietary government and the Quakers, and their unwillingness to be taxed for defence, until, the wine being freely used and then punch more than enough, men's tongues were loosed. There were toasts to the King and the governor, and at last I heard the general's voice raised.

He said: "Your health, Mr. Peters, and

when do you set out to cut that road for my troops? You are long about it." Mr. Peters said quietly: "When, sir, I get guards against the Indians for the wood-cutters; until then it will not be possible."

The general damned Pennsylvania and the Quakers, and said: "That colony must find guards for their own wood-cutters, and as to the Indians, his Majesty's regulars laugh at the idea of danger from them." Upon which, several officers, not very sober, cried out, "Hear, hear!"

Mr. Peters, who had taken very little wine, replied that they were not to be despised, meaning the savages, but that every step of the march would be at risk of ambuscades.

Then, to my amazement, General Braddock cried out that he despised such counsels and that the colonials were like old women.

On this Mr. Peters rose, and one or two other gentlemen, and I saw Mr. Franklin glance at him. As he hesitated, I said so that he alone could hear: "Pardon me, Mr. Peters, the man is drunk, and you are entirely right." Then I saw that his lordship spoke quickly to the general, who cried

out: "My apologies, Mr. Peters, and a glass with you. We have had too many vinous counsellors. You shall have your guards"—as indeed he did, but not until my lord had been very urgent, and also Mr. Franklin. Mr. Peters, very grave, bowed and sat down. When shortly his lordship went away, I made my own excuses and followed him.

The next day I happened to be in his lordship's quarters and Mr. Franklin present, when General Braddock called to pay his respects to Lord Fairfax. We rose to go out, but his lordship detained us. The general was in high spirits. He said to Mr. Franklin: "Only let the colonies keep their promise and all will be well."

I confess I was unprepared for the confidence with which he assured Mr. Franklin that he would take Duquesne and go on to Niagara and Frontenac, and that the fort would be an affair of a day or two.

"But, sir," said Mr. Franklin, "you must march through a narrow road in pathless, dense forests, and your line will be some four miles long. You will, I hope, take Duquesne, but you will be, I fear, in constant danger of being cut in two, for the

French and Indians are dexterous in ambuscades, and to send back relief quickly, if attacked, will be nigh to impossible with woods all about you. As to the waggons we talked of, I will get you all the waggons you want out of Pennsylvania, and shall set out for Lancaster at once."

The general thanked him, but said he must remind Mr. Franklin that he talked as a civilian, and that, although these savages might be formidable to raw American militia, they would make no impression on disciplined troops, and much more to like effect.

Mr. Franklin replied quietly: "I am conscious, sir, of the impropriety of arguing such matters with a military man, but I should like to ask Colonel Washington his opinion. He has had some experience in the irregular warfare of our woods."

His lordship, desirous, as I learned later, that I should not contradict my superiour, said: "I beg to answer for Mr. Washington that I am sure General Braddock will, as time serves, consult such colonial officers as have seen service on the frontier."

After other talk the general rose, and said he should be sure to take his lordship's advice.

XXXIII

WHEN alone with us the Postmaster-General talked with even greater seriousness, saying that in Philadelphia, so secure were they of the success of the campaign, that a gentleman, a Dr. Bond I think it was, proposed to raise money for an illumination to be ready when the news of victory came. Mr. Franklin told us that he had begged him to take warning from a verse in the Old Testament as to before battle and after, and this much pleased his lordship, who laughed and said, "Well put, sir"; but when I asked what the verse was, they both laughed and bade me read my Bible, and, indeed, I am none the wiser up to this day.

It was not alone the general who was discontented. On arriving at Wills Creek I found this letter from George Croghan, one of the most important traders on the frontier, and with a commission from Penn-

sylvania to make roads and secure waggons and Indian allies.

DEAR COLONEL: If the rest are like Sir John St. Clair, I shall be glad to be shut of the business. He swore at us for delay and said "no soldier should handle an axe, but by fire and sword he would force the inhabitants to do the work; we should be treated as traitors, and that when the General came he would give us ten bad words for one that he had given." You, Sir, know well how hard it is to stir up our border folks and what a task to get from farmers in the spring their waggons and horses. We are doing our best. I have secured Captain Jack—a guide hard to beat.

There was more of it, and enough to afford serious thought.

During our stay I heard nothing but complaints of our want of efficiency, and no one seemed to see that it was silly to expect to find everything at hand in a land as new as ours. Captain Orme and Ensign Allen complained on one occasion to Dr. Mercer and me that our men were languid, spiritless, and unsoldier-like. Dr. Mercer, who was a hot-headed Scotchman, said he had seen undisciplined Highlanders put to

rout regulars at Prestonpans and Falkirk, and that in the woods our men would beat the best grenadiers in the King's army. Orme grew angry and said Mercer was a damned rebel; but I succeeded in quieting them, although I insisted that Captain Orme would in time change his opinion, as indeed happened. Mercer was in a constant rage and told me over and over that the officers were insolent and that the general was ill with the disease called damned foolishness. I thought him imprudent and begged him to be careful; but as he had served in '45 with the Pretender, and come over here after his flight, he was, on that account, in bad odour with the regular officers, and, I feared, also with the general, who had been with the Duke of Cumberland upon the final bloody defeat of the rebels at Culloden. Dr. Mercer had just cause to complain, but I thought him unwise to talk so freely. He was, nevertheless, a gallant gentleman, and died a general, falling gloriously at Princeton when rallying his men.

I saw Mr. Franklin again but once before he went away. He was clearly not a man altogether to the liking of Lord Fairfax, but why, I never came to know. He seemed to

me at that time a conscientious and intelligent person, very able to get along with all manner of people. I must admit that he conducted matters of gravity as if they amused him and were not serious, a method which never altogether pleased me. When I justified the general's groaning over his many difficulties as to roads and transport and food, he said that his difficulties were of British making, and that had the force landed in Philadelphia, horses, waggons, and supplies would have been found in abundance. To this I agreed, for I thought the plan of the march ill chosen. After this the doctor amused himself with the astonishment the Indians would have when they got hold of the wigs of the officers—a jest which did not seem to me agreeable. He spoke also with much freedom of the general, and said to argue with him was useless and was like striking a pillow or reasoning with a wild animal, who had only its own thoughts and could not comprehend yours. I made no reply, and he fell to most ingenious talk about the temperature of springs and the ways of swimming. Notwithstanding his doubts, the great array of war kept me somewhat confident and cheer-

ful until I heard that nine hundred men of the French had passed Sandusky on their way to reinforce the French on the Ohio, so that I had to write Mr. Speaker Robinson that I feared we should have more to do than merely to march up and down the hills, as the general had said would be all.

It was May 19 when the general arrived at Fort Cumberland, and June 10 before he set out to cross the mountains, and after, as the general said, more expenditure of oaths in a month than he had needed in his whole Scotch campaign with the duke, of whom the general liked to speak.

I spent much of my time while we lay at this post in learning the methods of drill and discipline, and in aiding to satisfy the Virginia recruits that it was necessary to imitate the methods of the regulars, although if it came to wood fighting I believed the English officers and men would more need to learn the ways of the rangers. Yet some who judged our people by their dislike of strict drill were of opinion that the lowness and ignorance of their officers gave little hope of their future behaviour under fire. My task of helping to train the men was given up when the general ordered me

to go to Williamsburg and fetch back four thousand pounds, an errand not much to my liking.

Unfortunately, the detail was made without my having the opportunity of choice, and proved very unfit, giving me much concern and anxiety. I do not know why there was delay in assembling this detail, but eight days passed after I got my order before I was given the men. I believe they would not have been eight seconds in dispersing if we had been attacked.

Captain Horatio Gates, of a New York Independent company, advised not to take regulars, who would obey only their own officers; but I had no choice, and so set out and was gone a fortnight. On my return I slept every night in the waggon, with my precious money about me and pistols loaded. The men were drunken and disobedient until I promised strappado on our reaching camp, and indeed I was glad to be rid of the money and the guard.

I saw during this ride and later that, as Orme had told me, the men of the Forty-fourth and Forty-eighth regiments were drunken, mutinous, and disorderly, so that it was not alone our own failures to provide

which made difficult the task of our unfortunate commander.

I found the general much disgusted at the delays in supplying him, and, as I thought, most unwise, and only increased his trouble by abuse of the colonies, for the more men deserve abuse the less they like it, and get sullen and less than ever inclined to help.

Just before we set out from Fort Cumberland, the general being now in the saddle, Lord Fairfax presented me with a handsome pair of pistols, and said: "I should have been pleased to have had a son like you; but for that I must have had a wife, which is a calamity I have been spared. If occasion serves, I shall be glad to hear from you."

Lord Fairfax had informed me that General Braddock would ask my opinion and advice as to the use to be made of Indians and our rangers. He did consult me, but only, I believed, because his lordship had desired him to do so.

I never succeeded to make much impression upon him, and it was as the wise Mr. Franklin had said. Many Indians joined us on the way with their squaws, but the

chiefs were too little considered or consulted. Their women were insulted or worse, and those that came to-day, receiving no gifts, were gone to-morrow.

On June 6, Sir John St. Clair was sent on in advance with some six hundred choppers to widen and better my old road. After him came Sir Peter Halket's force. On June 10, if I remember aright, the general followed with his staff and the rest of the army. As soon as the march began, the lack of discipline became plain, and the officers were worse than the men and altogether too much drunkenness.

Captain Croghan said to me: "I should like to give these fellows a wood drill and upset half the rum-kegs." This was as we led our horses over the second mountain. "Why, sir," he said, "here are hundreds of waggons and enough gimcracks and nonsense to fit out a town, and all the officers of foot on horseback."

I said that I had represented to the general and Colonel Dunbar the risk of this long train, and urged that we use our horses for packhorses and to carry only what we really needed. "That would be," Captain

Croghan said, "for the men, blankets, an axe, a rifle, a knife, and ammunition."

He went on to tell us that he had urged this to be done again and again—that was, to Captains Orme and Shirley, the military secretary of the commander, for he had been told plainly enough that he was himself too small a person to converse with the general, and a d—d trader he had been called. He was sure the general would listen to no advice except from the King's officers. I had to admit that he listened to me at times, and had always said in a civil way that he would consider of what I advised, but got no further.

XXXIV

CROGHAN came to me the day after at my hut (I am not sure of this date), and with him was Mr. Gist and a tall man in buckskins, leggins, and moccasins. He carried a long rifle and a scalping-knife.

Captain Croghan said: "This, colonel, is my friend, Captain Jack, of whom I wrote. He has come with fifty Pennsylvania men to offer as scouts."

I had heard often of this man and was pleased that we were to have his services. I made him welcome, bade him be seated, and offered him rum, which he refused to take, saying he drank no spirits. He was very silent and made brief answers to my questions concerning the Indians and their inclinations. When I would have gone further, he rose and said his men were waiting to camp. He must see the general, and asked me to go with him. As we walked through the shelters the rangers had set up,

I saw many look at him with curiosity, which was not surprising, for he was not less than six feet three, but a gaunt, thin man, of melancholic aspect. He never spoke a word, but presently we met a certain Major Moore, a rough, hard-drinking officer of the grenadiers. As he stopped us, I saw that he was under liquor, as was too common. He said, "Whom have you got there? Make a fine grenadier." I said, "This is Captain Jack, a famous Pennsylvania scout," and so would have passed on, when the major said rudely to Captain Jack, "Who the deuce made you a captain?" The scout tapped his rifle and said, "That," and walked on, without saying more than his gesture seemed to imply. I could not avoid remarking, "You are well answered, major," for I have always had a liking for men who do not talk much. I contented myself with saying to the scout that, as usual, the major was in liquor.

I sent in my name to General Braddock, and we were desired to enter his tent. Here I introduced Captain Jack as an experienced ranger and said he had fifty good scouts. The general asked me to be seated, but as he did not invite the scout to sit down,

I remained standing. As for the captain, he said not so much as a word, but waited, looking steadily at the general, who asked me a question concerning the roads, and then said to me, "Let the man wait; I will see about him in a day or two." Then he asked what pay they wanted, to which Captain Jack said, "No pay, nothing."

I tried to make the general understand the great service we might expect in the woods from such men, but he replied impatiently that these men could not be drilled, and that he had experienced troopers on whom he could rely for any service he might require. He was going on to give orders as to where the men should camp, when Captain Jack turned and went out without further words. The general damned him roundly for an ill-bred cur, and I made after him in haste. When I had overtaken him, he said very quietly: "Good-by, Colonel Washington; when you have a separate command send for me." I made a vain effort to induce him to remain. In half an hour he called his men together, and they went away into the woods Indian fashion, one after the other, and we saw him no more. Captain Croghan told me

that this man had had his whole family massacred by the Indians, and had spent years in revenging himself, sometimes alone, and sometimes with a party, for he was both esteemed and trusted on the border-lands of Pennsylvania. Both Croghan and I were much disappointed.

Amid the difficulties caused by European need of useless luxuries and by the absence in officers and men of what Mr. Franklin called "pliability in the hands of new circumstances," I was getting useful lessons and was made to see that when a commander cannot get what he wants he must make the most of what little he has. Indeed, the delay in getting waggons he could have done without was, in the end, a calamity to the general.

The army, over two thousand strong, followed routes over and through the Alleghanies which I had used in 1754, and which could easily have been bettered by free use of trained scouts and our own axe-men sent on ahead.

There was much sickness, and the regulars suffered in many ways by reason of ignorance and want of knowing how better to take care of themselves. They com-

plained bitterly of the mosquitos, black flies, and midges, and took so kindly to smudges that Orme said the smoke was like that the Israelites had, with less or no trouble. There was, indeed, some reasonable cause for complaint by men unused to the woods. We had twice the worst thunder and lightning I ever saw. Trees were struck, but no man, nor ever is in the woods. Three men died of the bite of rattlesnakes, but few escaped the little forest bugs called ticks, which bore into the skin and leave sores and great itch for weeks. Our rangers undressed every night and picked off these pests. The soldiers were too lazy or did not know enough, and many were lamed or ulcered for want of such care.

Even before we reached Little Meadows certain officers saw the danger of our thin line; more than four miles of it stretched out across streams and marshes in deep woods. Had the French been in force we had certainly been sooner ambushed. Even the men became uneasy as we entered the white-pine woods beyond Great Savage Mountain. Here the deep of the forest was like twilight, and the trees of great bigness. When the rangers told the soldiers that

these dark woods were called the "Shades of Death,"—but why I do not know,—they were more alarmed, and were glad about the 18th to be out of the forest and descending the shaggy slopes of the Meadow Mountain to Little Meadows, where was more light and room to camp.

It was a wonder to us frugal woodsmen how all this host, cumbered as it was, did at last get over the hills and reach the Little Meadows, this being about June 18.

On the evening of our arrival the general desired me to remain after the other aides had received orders and gone away. He then opened his mind to me with great freedom about the tardiness of the march and his desire to know what was my opinion concerning the matter in hand. When he had made an end of speaking, I said that he had more men than were needed, but that to push on in haste was desirable and to take only the light division, leaving the heavy troops and most of the baggage.

I begged leave to add that Duquesne was as yet weakly garrisoned, and the long dry weather would keep the rivers low, and hard to navigate by reinforcements from Venango and the lake, so that if we could dis-

mount officers, take to packhorses, and push on without encumbrance, we could be sure of an easy victory.

A council of all the field-officers was called soon after I left the tent; but my rank not entitling me to be present, I was pleased to hear from Captain Orme that the general had stated my views and that a more rapid march was decided. I was much disappointed to learn that we were still to be overburdened with artillery and waggons. I gave up one of my horses for a packhorse and saw it no more. Out of two hundred and twelve horses allowed to officers, only twelve were thus offered. Why the general did not order them taken I do not know.

The force selected was in all about twelve hundred men and their artillery; but in place of pushing on with vigour, they must needs stop to bridge every brook and level every mole-hill. In four days we marched only twelve miles.

St. Clair and Colonel Gage were sent on ahead to clear the way with four hundred men, and the general followed with eight hundred. We still moved so slowly that we were constantly halted because of over-

taking our pioneers. It was up hill and down, where cannon and waggons had to be lowered by ropes. There were deep morasses and constant scares from outlying parties of Indians.

XXXV

ON the 21st we entered the colony of Penn, and on the 30th June dropped down from the hills to Stewart's Crossing on the Youghiogheny. Here St. Clair, sent on in advance, had cleared the ground for a camp.

We had been all of ten days in marching twenty-four miles. Day after day, as Croghan and I uneasily hung about the flanks and the rear, we saw the long line of red-coated, cumbered men, sweating in heavy uniforms, with waggons and cannon, slowly moving through the silent woods, so full, to our minds, of peril.

I had been ill for some days, but at the Youghiogheny River I fell worse of a sudden with a fever and pain in the head. The general was most kind and at last ordered me to remain, leaving me a guard and my dear Dr. Craik. Colonel Dunbar's division had been left behind, to his great indignation, and was to follow slowly with

the baggage-train. I was in the utmost gloom at my detention, being in a way responsible for the new movement. The chance to be, by ill luck, laid up while a battle might take place much disturbed me. I wrote my brother Jack I would not miss it for five hundred pounds.

While I lay in bed most impatient, the detachment went on, and soon after I had this letter from Christopher Gist, who was acting as guide:

RESPECTED SIR: We are moving along as solemn as a box-turtle, one day two miles, which any smart turtle might compass. The pickets are doubled, and men sleep with their arms, for, good Lord! if a branch cracks they give an alarm, and if a poor devil strays there is a scalp gone, for every step of our march is watched. Still I am sure there are no big parties out, for I have been off in advance and been within half a mile of the fort, and came nigh to losing my hair, but with decent good fortune we have the place. I should be easier with a few hundred of our own people in the advance and on our skirts, but they are kept in the rear, the Lord knows why.

Captain Orme also wrote to me of frequent night alarms, and of the general's

confidence at being now but thirty miles from the fort. Here two days' halt was made to await fresh supplies from Dunbar.

On July 4, being stronger, I started in the rear of a party of one hundred men just come up from Colonel Dunbar with provisions. I was set upon going with them, but was too weak to ride a horse and must needs use a waggon. As the road was much cut up, my bones were almost jolted through the small cover left on them. On the 8th I reached the camp, now but thirteen miles from Duquesne.

My journey took me through the Great Meadows, near where was my little fight, and past the ruined palisadoes of Fort Necessity. I saw them with great interest, and felt some sense of gratification that now I might pay up my score against those who had both humbled and insulted my King and myself.

Once, as my waggon approached the rear-guard, we came upon a dozen or more stragglers. Some had fallen out tired, and some were loitering to gather berries. I cried out to warn them of the danger they were in, and, in fact, about a quarter of an hour later they ran after us, crying, "Indians!" They

may have had cause, but all the strange noises of the woods alarmed them, and this time the rangers said it was a wildcat.

The sound of distant martial music from the camps which we were come near to seemed to revive my mind, and I was able to cast off the feeling of gloom and converse with Captain Shirley, the military secretary, who had ridden back with an order. He said to me that we had been a month in marching less than a hundred miles. Captain Morris, who was with him, said it was true, but all was well that ended well, and we had the fort at our mercy and would attack next day. I advised my friends, as I had before done, that it would be well if the officers could be dressed in wood colours, like our scouts; but Captain Shirley replied that the general would never allow of it, and, indeed, when next day I got rid of my fire-red coat and put on a fringed buckskin shirt, I was no little jeered at, and Colonel Gage made some comments, which, I trust, he came later to regret. I am of opinion that the absence of a gaudy red coat saved me from many balls and enabled me to be of use when the other aides were wounded. I was much of Mr. Franklin's opinion that if

fine feathers make fine birds, they also make them an easier prey for the fowler.

Indeed, the learned Postmaster-General made himself very merry over the queues and the stiff stocks and the bright scarlet uniforms. He thought the officers only needed corsets, which I was told they did often use at home.

When, in the afternoon, very tired and weak, I reached the tent made ready for me by the kindness of my brother aides, I lay down to rest, and, as Captain Morris was now on duty, I asked him to tell me what was to be our mode of approach to the fort. I was able easily to recall the general features of the country, for the camp was now set about twelve miles from Frazier's former trading-station, where I stopped on my return from my mission to the French. We lay some ten miles to the east of the Monongahela River, and, as was said, thirteen from Duquesne as the crow flies.

As I rested and we talked, came also Captain Shirley and Captain Gates of the Twenty-eighth Regiment, with Stephens, Hamilton, and Stewart of the Virginians. Of all of them I was the only man not killed or wounded in the next day's battle.

I may well entertain my brother August's belief that the conspicuous hand of Providence was over me, and he must be worse than an infidel who lacks faith in it.

No thought of to-morrow troubled our council of war, and we discussed with spirit what our superiours meant to do. I drew on a piece of birch bark a rude sketch of the country. The fort lay on a high bluff in the angle made by the Ohio and Monongahela rivers. We were, as I said, some ten miles to the east of the latter stream and on the same side as the fort. Between us and it lay the deep, rugged ravines of Turtle Creek and the brooks which run into it. The country beyond it was densely wooded and without any road. To cross the creek and cut a road to the fort would be the most direct way; otherwise we must march to and cross the Monongahela, a fordable river, and afterwards move along bluffs three or four hundred feet high, and follow the stream for five miles. We should then descend to the water and arrive at a second ford; having crossed it, we should be again on the same side as the fort. Then there would be before us a slope, and, some two miles distant, hid in the woods, the bastions

of Duquesne. Having made clear to my fellow aides the localities, we considered the two routes, with some differences of opinion in regard to which was the better, until they were called away, and I was left alone.

Soon after came Sir John St. Clair, sent by the general with a kind message. I then learned that some effort had been made to cross Turtle Creek, but that it had been found impossible to get the artillery over and that the engineers pronounced it impracticable. Upon this the general had given orders to change the route, so that we should follow the traders' horse-trail, on which we had made our road, and should march to the river. There we were to ford the stream as I have said, move on the farther bank some miles, and recross by the second ford to the east side again, where the lay of the land allowed, as was supposed, of an easy approach to the fort.

I was still weak, but although I could have desired more rest, I walked at dusk through the great clearing made for the camp, to report myself at once to the general's headquarters. I had been sorry for his obstinacy and the rudeness he showed in laughing at our way of fighting, but I

had been told by Sir Peter Halket that he had said that Mr. Franklin and Colonel Washington were the only trustworthy people he had met in the colonies. I thought this foolish as showing poor judgment; but he had been most kind to me, and now, in spite of all his blunders and our own failures to supply him promptly, which were with some justice to be complained of, we were, as it seemed, on the point of success.

When I presented myself, the general asked most pleasantly concerning my health, and if I was well enough to serve as aide. I assured him I was, but I was really at the time feeble enough. When I ventured to make him my compliments on the near prospect of success before him, he laughed and asked where had been the need for our rangers and the tribes of Indians, and then made me a very fine speech, which I must admit to having been pleased at. I ventured to ask leave to go on in the advance with the Virginia wood-rangers, so as to secure the pioneers and road-makers from an ambuscade. He replied shortly: "Oh, damn your half-drilled rangers! I shall keep them as a rear-guard." I rose

and apologized, feeling that I had been too forward and had better have held my tongue. Indeed, I excused myself as well as I could, and upon this his face cleared, and he said: "Colonel Gage is to have the advance, and what would he say to the best regiment of the King being protected by a mob of squatters and border farmers. No, sir; I desire you as my aide." I said no more, and returned to my tent.

I have never found that the coming of decisive events kept me awake when I was myself the person who had the duty of decision; but this night, whether from great fatigue or not, for that does keep a man from sleep, or that I was still fevered, I lay awake long, unable to free my mind from anxious thoughts.

I regretted that I had not asked Mr. Franklin why at night we heard so many sounds in the woods which are not heard by day. No doubt he would have found an explanation. Long after the camp was at rest I remained sleepless, hearing the quick waters of the creek and the noises of the wood, with the hoot-owl's cry and the chipmunks gamboling over the canvas of my tent, and such stir of the camp as never

quite ceased. The way we were to march troubled me and others, especially Sir Peter Halket, who had forebodings, concerning which Dr. Mercer had some superstitious ideas, such as my mother often had, but which I never entertained, or if as to any, it is in the way of dreams.

I had reason for my fears, for the two fords we were to cross could be easily disputed by a small party. I concluded that to leave all baggage and artillery to come later by the fords, and to make a quick and direct march over the creek and along a ridge leading to the fort, would be the better way.

Having settled my mind as to what I would have done had I been in command, I disposed myself for sleep, but with no good result until so late that I heard no reveille sounded, and was waked by my orderly.

XXXVI

I DO not pretend, even now, to be acquainted with all the reasons which influenced the general; but having made up his mind, we broke camp on the 8th and marched southwest along a little stream the scouts called Long Run, and so about eight miles towards the river Monongahela, being thus at last two miles from the ford he meant to cross the next day.

When, in the afternoon about six o'clock, I was released from duty, I walked through the camps with Sir Peter Halket. The men were cleaning their guns and brushing their clothes and soaping queues and pipe-claying, all as if for parade and very needless.

Sir Peter, a man of excellent parts and a good soldier, had expressed himself in the council as averse to the plan of march. When he asked after my health and if I had again regained my strength, I replied that I was fit for duty, but had been better if I had been able to sleep. He said with

gravity that many would sleep soundly to-morrow and that he was sure he himself would be killed. This seemed strange to me, and I could only reply that I did not think I should be killed, but that we might both be wrong; and yet both of us were right, for these matters are in the hands of the great Disposer of Events, and have never troubled me on going into battle. One of my aides in the Revolutionary War, Colonel Scammel, to whom I was much attached, did always believe he would be killed, as indeed happened, at last, to my sorrow, at Yorktown.

Dr. Craik was with me that evening and found me chilled and full of aches; but notwithstanding a potion he gave me, I slept ill again, and was aroused in the morning by my good doctor. He advised a glass of rum, for which I felt the better, and when I had eaten and was in the saddle I repaired to where was General Braddock, a short distance from the shore. He was in a gay humour and very kind, asking if I felt well and would drink with him to the King that evening in the French fort. I could do no more than reply that to do so would give me great pleasure. I was presently sent

down to the shore with a message, and there saw Colonel Gage crossing the shallow ford to some open meadow-lands on the farther side. He was to secure the two fords by which the whole force following him was to cross and then recross, so as to be again on the same side of the river as Fort Duquesne. After him, about four o'clock, came Sir John St. Clair, with carpenters —or, as we should say, axemen—and engineers, some three hundred in all.

I lingered a few moments and saw the last of the advance, as they marched up from the farther bank of the river and their red coats disappeared into the forest beyond the ford, which was, I thought, well chosen and shallow.

Before I went back, Gist, the trader, and Captain Croghan came to speak to me. I remarked that we had done well to come so far without more trouble from the Indians. Gist laughed and said: "They have never left us since we dropped you at the Youghiogheny." Then Croghan cried out, "There they are," and there was a sound of musketry beyond the river. It proved to be a small body of savages, easily dispersed by Gage. It being then about six

o'clock A.M., the signal to fall in, which we call the "general," was beat, and the main body fell in with fresh cartridges.

The officers were in full uniform, and so, with fixed bayonets and colours flying and the drums beating the Grenadier's March, they waded the stream.

I sat in the saddle with the two aides, Captains Orme and Morris, and with the interest of a young soldier watched this fine body of men fall in with perfect discipline on the further side and disappear in their turn. This being the main body, the staff followed with the general, and I was sent back to hasten up the rangers, who had the rear. I found them about two hundred and thirty strong, moving slowly, most in hunting-shirts and fur caps and moccasins. A part were thrown out far to right and left in the woods. Ensign Allen and an officer whose name I forget appeared to be in command, and were vainly endeavouring to keep up some of the military order they had been teaching. I thought them wanting in sense and wished I had the rangers at the front. I gave my message and left them. Then I made haste to ride back to the ford, which was still held by a small guard. Here

I waited, as I was ordered to do, to see the rear well over and into the woods. After crossing the ford I found that a rough road had been cleared by the French along the shore, and hurried through the woods beside the moving column to report.

It was noon before we got to the second ford, above where Turtle Creek empties into the river; and, after much delay with the artillery, we got over, I think a little after one o'clock, as fine a sight as ever I saw. Here, before us, were some open meadows about a quarter-mile wide, and, twenty feet above the ford, a fair road leading upward over a little stream called Frazier's Run, and into the woods. Very quickly, the aides carrying messages at need, the men were got into marching orders. For a full quarter of a mile there were bottom-lands in two easy rises, and beyond these the ground rose amid long grass, very dry, and thick bushes, great rocks, and trunks of fallen trees, which the garrison must have felled for fuel.

Long afterwards I rode over this field and saw better the trap into which we fell. On both sides of the road, which was broad and much used, the ground rose, and here, where the wood was more dense, amid thick

underwood, were ravines, some very deep and others only five or six feet. These gullies lay among great trees, pines and gum, and a tangle of grape-vines, brambles, and Indian plums. One long and deeper ravine was the bed of a little creek, and on the right of the road the ground rose quite steep. Further on, as I saw at the time, for the advance was slow, I observed that the woods seemed to show a series of low hills, and beyond them no greater rise of land to the fort, which was hid some seven miles away, at the junction of the rivers; nor did we ever have sight of it.

Meanwhile we of the main body, halting now and then, marched slowly up from the ford towards the deeper woods, losing sight of the advance as it entered the forest, and quite ignorant of the ravines, or of an enemy, so hid were they in the underbrush.

The main body halted in the mid-space, where the battle was later engaged, so that we lay for the time just on the second bottom. By this time Colonel Gage was far in front with guides and engineers, engaging in the woods, and Sir John St. Clair, with his working-party of pioneers, axemen, and grenadiers, followed. All was very or-

derly, with flanking-parties thrown out on both sides, but not, to my mind, far enough. Orme wrote me afterwards, when he had learned better, "It was all as if for a fine review in St. James's Park."

XXXVII

AT this time, as I said, I was with General Braddock on the upper bottom. I considered that between the place where the three hundred men of the advance were entering the thicker woods, and the ford, might have been about six hundred perches. I took out my watch and saw that it was ten minutes to two, the rear being yet crossing or in the river. As I turned to look forward, heavy firing broke out far away in the woods and among the rocks and bushes. I knew too well the Indian yells. Very soon I could see men falling and others dropping back. Orme rode forward to get some account for the general. In a few minutes he returned, badly wounded in the left arm. Sir John still advancing, the general ordered Colonel Burton, of the main van, forward with eight hundred men. There was now thick smoke about the advance on the edge of the deeper wood, and amid yells and cries the whole of what was left of the pio-

neers and their guard fell back out of the woods, at first a few, and then many, and down the upper slope, somewhat disordering Sir John's supporting party.

Sir Peter Halket was told to remain with four hundred men as a baggage-guard, and the general rode forward himself with Colonel Burton's eight hundred men, ordering a bayonet charge of a party up the hill on our right, whence came so hot a fire from unseen enemies that the officers were at once killed, and the men fell back at a run.

For some time Sir John's force behaved with great courage and let the broken pioneers pass through their lines, but could never be got to go farther, and stood stupidly firing into the wood. At last, as the officers fell, the advance became more broken and began to retreat slowly, but at last running, until they were mixed up with Colonel Burton's reinforcement.

I never saw in my later warfare worse confusion nor a hotter fire, nor men better hid, for the savages and French lay in the ravines among the brush and picked off the mounted officers, or fired into the masses of men with no need to take accurate aim.

More and more the rear was forced for-

ward to support the retreating troops; but as none of them could see any enemy and were falling every moment from the fire, a general panic took place among the men, from which no exertion on the part of the officers could recover them. In the early part of the action some of the irregulars, as they were called, without directions, advanced to the right, in loose order, to attack; but this, unhappily, from the unusual appearance of the movement, being mistaken for cowardice and a running away, was discountenanced.

It is my opinion that even then if the general had remained on the cleared ground below and there rallied the men, where was open space and on the sides little cover, the day might have been saved, as the small French and Indian force would never have left the woods. He, however, pushed on in person, urging an advance, and sent Captain Morris to order up Sir Peter Halket and the rear-guard. We were now caught on both sides among ravines, great rocks, and trees, where on our front and on both flanks the enemy spread out in the woods. The more of our force came up from the rear, the easier was the slaughter. At this

time, when it was not yet too late, amid the confusion which became more and more general, I made an offer to head the provincials and engage the enemy in their own way; but the general would not listen or perhaps did not hear, for the noise was great. At all events, the propriety of it was not seen until it was too late for execution. Whether he heard me or not, I cannot say. What with our regulars shooting at random, the replies from the ravines and woods, the orders of officers, the yells of the Indians, and the cries of the wounded, there was a confusedness fit to turn any man's head. When the soldiers tried to take wood shelter, as was proper and reasonable, the general and their officers cursed them for cowards and struck them with the flat of their swords. The poor dogs tried to obey their leaders, and again and again formed into platoons, facing to left or right, thus making them only the easier to kill. I saw Captain Orme of the artillery fall dead as they rode up with the cannon, and the engineer, Captain Henry Gordon, dropped wounded, but got up and did, I believe, succeed to reach the ford.

The men with the swivels stood to it well

in giving some shots, and then gave way, most of them tumbling almost in heaps. Seeing this, I dismounted with two other officers, and made a man hold my horse, and aided to fire into the ravine on the right; but the few men left who should have helped to serve the piece soon dropped, hurt or dead, and seeing I could no further assist, I mounted again and turned out of the broken ranks to encourage the Virginia rangers, who were running up without orders and spreading out to right and left, taking shelter wherever was a tree or rock, all most gallant and well done. Although the turmoil was such as I cannot describe, there were many brave efforts to rally and to carry the high ground above our right. All this lasted fully an hour or more, for at times, discipline prevailing, orders were given to storm the flanking slopes, and constantly failed to be effectual, for, as the officers were picked off, the men ran back to the main body.

The smoke was by this time so thick as somewhat to obscure all things at a distance, but a sudden wind, arising, cleared it away, and I saw that we were giving way more and more, the whole body of the force mov-

ing slowly down the slope. As I looked about me in despair, my horse fell and rolled over dead. By good fortune I had learned in fox-hunting how to fall clear. In a moment I was up, and saw that the troops were scattered in detachments and firing at random, or vainly trying in groups to follow their officers, who were shot down mercilessly. I saw Captain Shirley, the general's secretary, fall dead. He was quite close to me, and amidst all this tumult his horse stood still, and, to my amazement, began to eat the grass. I caught the beast and mounted. I hardly knew what to do. The Virginians were being shot by the regulars, who knew no more than to fire wherever they saw smoke from behind a tree or bush. As to orders, there were at this time none, and, indeed, until just above the river, no sufficient space to move in without taking to the woods.

I tried to help the general and the few left of the officers in their efforts to effect an orderly retreat. I have heard that five horses were shot under him. This I was told by Captain Morris, and it is no doubt true, for the horse is a large object and easy to hit. Few officers were left alive, and

those who were unhurt could not get the regulars to obey a command. What was left of twelve hundred men were huddled together in groups in and out of the woods, as I have seen sheep in a storm.

The general showed great courage, and made many efforts in person to rally the men or get them to retreat in an orderly way. He was carried down the slope with the rout, but remained as obstinate as ever as to the way of fighting, insisting on the men re-forming. Sir Peter Halket, Morris, and I vainly entreated him to order the soldiers to take shelter as the rangers did. As Sir Peter spoke, he dropped dead. His son, the captain, dismounted to help him, and fell dead on his father's body.

I have never seen a man who could describe what took place in the midst of a battle, nor can I pretend to greater accuracy. I remember that after two hours or more I became suddenly sure that all was lost. The whole disordered mass now broke and ran as sheep before hounds, leaving artillery, provisions, baggage, and the wounded and dying—in short, everything. When finally a dozen gallant officers threw themselves in front, they were knocked down and tram-

pled on. We had as little success as if we had attempted to stop the wild bears of the mountains, or torrents, with our feet. It was quite useless.

At this time General Braddock was under a great oak near to where we left the waggons. I was beside him and heard him cry out, "They have got me." Captain Stewart, of the Virginia light guard, caught him as he reeled in the saddle, shot through the right arm and lung. The men ran past us, refusing to help; but another officer aiding, we somehow got him on to a small covered cart, and he was carried along in what was now a mad flight to get to the ford. I heard him cry out: "Let me alone. Let me die here."

The waggoners in our rear near the ford cut loose the traces and mounted their horses and fled. In spite of the great courage shown by the officers, who in camp were drunken or seemed to be effeminate or lazy, all who were of mind to resist were swept away by a mere mob of panic-struck men. Men caught on to my stirrups, and even the horse's mane, but somehow I got free and out again to one side. Instantly my second horse staggered and went down. I saw Dr. Craik, near by, with the utmost

devotion, although himself wounded, helping a disabled officer to walk away. I was now afoot, and, as I saw how complete was the rout, I began to fear that our brave Virginians would none of them escape. They held the fringe of the woods with wonderful courage, using their rifles, and keeping back the French and Indians. Nothing else saved the troops of his Majesty from complete massacre.

As I stood still a moment I heard Croghan call loudly to me to take to cover. I took his advice, and God alone knows how I escaped death. I had four balls through my clothes.

The leaders of the rangers now saw how great was their peril. The regulars were by this time near the ford, in the river, or across and far beyond it. A few brave men in groups were retreating slowly, firing useless shots. The enemy, yelling in triumph, were crawling or leaping nearer from time to time. Now and then a painted savage ran out from cover and fled back, shaking a bloody scalp.

The rangers had lost heavily, but those who were left slipped from one shelter to another, and at last, when there was little cover left, ran down to the river, and I with

them. Few would have got away except for the desire of the Indians to plunder the dead and the baggage and to collect scalps, and that the French were too few in number to venture on pursuit.

I got over the ford in haste, and standing still on the rise of ground beyond the river, looked at my watch. I could hardly believe it to be, as I saw, five o'clock. Most of those who were unhurt were now safe, and with Captain Croghan I began to gather the wreck of our poor rangers. One company was almost all gone; another lost every officer and many men. As to the regulars, seven hundred, nearly half of the force, were dead or wounded. A part of what was left of this fine army was soon scattered beyond the two fords, and later was starved in the woods or got at last into the camps.

About a hundred men were gathered by the officers a quarter of a mile beyond our first ford. Lieutenant-Colonel Burton rallied some hundreds of men, and later about eighty, under Colonel Gage, joined them. To my relief, and greatly to my surprise, there was no pursuit. We pushed on with the wounded general, and at last, as night fell, camped in much discomfort.

XXXVIII

THAT night the parties and sentinels thrown out deserted in an hour. Although very weak, I sat up beside the general all night. Dr. Craik, who had cared for his wound in the lung, assured me that he would certainly die before dawn; but he lived longer than was expected. I never remember having been more disturbed in mind than during that night.

We all sat up, armed, in or about the rude shelter which held General Braddock, and talked in whispers sadly of the battle. Captain Montresor and also Captain Gordon of the engineers, who gave the first alarm, and who was severely wounded, declared to me that so complete were the shelters that he never saw so much as a half-dozen of the enemy. We could only lament the fate of the wounded left on the field, for the French made later no return of prisoners. Every moment I expected to hear the yells of the Indians.

At break of day we rigged a kind of litter and got away, being soon joined, to my relief, by Colonel Gage, who was severely contused, and his eighty men. I caught here a stray waggon-horse and rode him, with a rope bridle and no saddle but a blanket.

As we pushed on through the woods, Colonel Gage talked with me at length of the disaster. He made many excuses for the soldiers, as that they had been worn out by labour on the way, had no rum, and were disheartened by the tales our rangers had told them of the Indians.

Indeed, I fear it was true that the Virginians amused themselves with talk about legions of rattlesnakes, bears, and scalping. Croghan said the regulars were babes in the woods and quite as helpless. I made answer to the colonel that but for our rangers few of his Majesty's men would have seen their homes, and that the soldiers had behaved like poltroons. He said that was true, and after this we walked our horses on through the woods in silence, the rangers ahead.

I met this officer again in 1773, when, being a general, he was entertained at dinner by the citizens of New York. At this

time the freedom of the city of New York was presented to him in a gold box having on it the arms of that city, and below, those of the King.[1] Our final intercourse was by letter, when he was besieged in Boston and I felt it needful to remonstrate upon his treatment of prisoners.

So many officers were wounded that, early on the day after the battle, although very weak, it fell to me, having at last been better horsed, to carry orders to the force we had left forty miles in our rear.

With a half-dozen horse I rode on all night in a drizzle of rain, and so all the next day, very melancholy and ready to drop with fatigue. Indeed, I fell down as I dismounted when I rode in to Colonel Dunbar's camp, and was only revived by a little spirits and a good meal.

The whole force which we had left here were more scared, I believe, than those who had been in the battle; for the runaway waggoners told terrible stories, and it was with great difficulty that this division of the army was kept from flying.

The shocking scenes which presented themselves in this march to Dunbar's camp

[1] Now in the possession of Lord Rosebery.

are not to be described: the dead, the dying, the groans, the lamentations and cries for help of the wounded along the road (for those who were hurt endeavoured, from the first commencement of the action, or rather the confusion, to escape to the second division), were enough to pierce a heart of adamant. Our trouble was not a little increased by the impervious darkness occasioned by the thick woods, which rendered it almost impossible for the guides to know when they were in or out of the track except by groping on the ground with their hands to find the way. It was happy for the wreck of the foremost division that they left such a quantity of valuable and enticing baggage on the field as to occasion a scramble and contention in the seizure and distribution of it among the enemy; for if a pursuit had taken place by passing directly across the deep defiles of Turtle Creek, which General Braddock had avoided, they would have got into our rear, and then the whole, except a few woodsmen, would have fallen victims to the merciless savages.

The provisions and waggon needed for the general were made ready during the

night, and at break of day, with two companies of grenadiers, I rode back again, hardly knowing if I should drop on the road. I met the general at Gist's cabin, some thirteen miles away. On our return we halted half a day at Dunbar's camp, and then hurried on with his force to Great Meadows, where we camped on the 13th of July. There were, as some of us believed, still men enough, if fitly handled, to return and surprise the French; but, as Gist said, these men were already defeated, and no one of those in command meant to try it again. Indeed, Dunbar intended for Philadelphia and to wait there for reinforcements. Even Governor Dinwiddie would have had him make a new campaign; but they had all of them had, as Dr. Craik said, a big dose of Indian medicine, and a council decided with the colonel. The governor was much troubled when he heard of this decision, and, as he told me later, wrote to Lord Halifax that he would have now not only to guard the border, but to protect the counties from combinations of negro slaves, who had become, Governor Dinwiddie declared, audacious since General Braddock's defeat, because the poor creatures be-

lieved the French would give them their freedom. My wounded general's proud spirit gave way when he heard of Colonel Dunbar's intention. He lived four days after the battle, having been brought in much pain, and still more distress of mind, to the camp at Great Meadows.

For the most part he was silent and only now and then let a groan. Dr. Craik told me that he cried out over and over: "Who would have believed it possible?" Once he said to Captain Stewart: "We shall know better next time; but what will the duke say? [That was his Grace of Cumberland.] What will he say?" On the morning of the 13th Dr. Craik said the general had made his will and desired to see me. When he was aware of my coming into his hut, he put out his left hand, saying, "That is the only hand which is left," for the ball had gone through his right arm. He was said to be a great wit, but that a man about to die should have spirit to use his dying breath in a jest much astonished me.

He said: "I want you to take my horse and my man, Bishop. I have told St. Clair." Then he said: "I should have taken your advice. Too late; too late." After

this he closed his eyes, and again, after a little, opened them and said feebly: "If I lived I should never wish to see a red coat again. My compliments to the governor." He spoke no more, only, "How they will curse me!" and I went out. In fact, I was too weak to endure the deadly sorrow with which this brave man's miserable end afflicted me, to whom he had been so kind a friend.

I endeavoured to distract my mind by examining the remains of the fort I had here made. To my amazement, I saw, as I moved about, that there was little discipline, and I observed that where there is too much drill and mechanical order a defeat does away with it entirely. The colonials it was hard to instruct; but as every man was used to rely on himself at any minute, and not to look all the time for orders, they suffered less during disaster, and on a retreat knew how to care for themselves. Now the few that were left looked on with wonder at the stupid destruction of waggons, provisions, and even artillery. Many of the officers were disgusted, and protested against these disgraceful proceedings.

But Colonel Dunbar meant to move on

to Philadelphia, as he said, for winter quarters, and yet now it was only July, and he had men enough left to guard the frontier or to return and take the fort.

I felt sick and worn out, and soon went to my shelter among the Virginians. I threw myself down and fell into a deep sleep, and indeed never stirred until Captain Walter Stewart had to shake me to wake me up. I must have dreamed, for he told me I had called out "Indians" twice.

When I was well awakened, he said: "We are to move at once. Every frog that croaks and every screech-owl is an Indian for these whipped curs. The general died at twelve o'clock. He is to be buried in the roadway, so that the red devils may not dig up his scalp. Colonel Dunbar asks that you will read the service."

I thought the request strange until he reminded me, as indeed I knew, that the chaplain, Mr. Hamilton, who had behaved with good sense and courage in the action, was badly wounded, and that the colonel, who was the proper person for this sad business, was occupied in arranging for the march and in destroying what had been gathered at such great cost.

It was just before break of day I went out after Stewart, feeling a kind of satisfaction that the coward in command was not to commit to the grave my poor general, whom, being dead, every one would abuse.

XXXIX

IF I had the pen of a good writer I should incline to describe what I saw. There were great fires burning, and all manner of baggage and stores thrown on them. The regulars were chopping up the artillery-waggons and casting ammunition into a creek.

About a hundred yards away from my hut, in the middle of the road, a deep grave was dug. A few officers and men were gathered about it, and on the ground lay the general's body, wrapt in a cloak, but no coffin. I looked about me, not knowing how to conduct the matter. Then an orderly handed me the chaplain's prayer-book, with a marker at the funeral service.

As I was about to begin, Lieutenant-Colonel Burton came forward with a flag and laid it decently over the dead man. Then he placed on it his sword, and fell back, and all uncovered. After this I read slowly, for the

light was yet dim, the service of the church. This being over, the men lowered the body into the grave and filled it up with earth, and cast stones and bushes over it. No guard was ordered, and no volley fired, lest, as was said, it might be heard by the enemy, which appeared to me foolish, for there was noise enough, and at any minute one hundred men in the woods would have routed the whole camp.

Thus died a man whose good and bad qualities were intimately blended. He was brave even to a fault and in regular service would have done honour to the army. His attachments were warm, his enmities were strong, and, having no disguise about him, both appeared in full force. He was generous and disinterested, but plain and blunt in his manner, even to rudeness.

Dunbar made haste to get away, and I was not less pleased to be out of an ill-contrived business.

This affair was a serious blow to the belief in the colonies as to the high value of the King's soldiers. It became like a proverb in Virginia to say a man "ran like a regular."

Mr. Franklin said to me long afterwards

that this disaster gave us the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the powers of British regular troops had not been well founded, and indeed I am assured that when Lord Percy's and Colonel Pitcairn's force was put to flight at Lexington the older farmers on our own frontiers, when they knew what had been done, were less amazed than the minute-men of Massachusetts.

We reached Wills Creek on the 18th, as Morris said, the worst-beaten army that had not been in battle. Colonel Dunbar did not require my aid, and my general being dead, my service as a volunteer was at an end.

The march to the settlements was most disgraceful—all in cowardly haste to get out of the wilderness. I am satisfied that no troops are so given to pillage as a retreating army, and certainly none was ever worse conducted by the officers or more disorderly than Colonel Dunbar's force. The settlers and outlying farms near Fort Cumberland suffered much; men and women were misused, and chickens and cattle stolen. I heard afterwards that in their march through Pennsylvania Dunbar's men plundered and insulted the farmers still

worse, and were quite enough, Mr. Franklin said, to put us out of all patience with such defenders.

I bade good-by to the aides of the general, and would have had Orme and Morris go home with me to be cared for by Dr. Craik, but they preferred to go on to Philadelphia. They were much dispirited, but had only warm praise for my Virginia rangers. I was in no better humour, and felt, as I rode away, that we were on the edge of an awful crisis for the border counties. The favourable sentiments Sir John St. Clair and Colonel Burton were pleased to express respecting me could not but be pleasing; but the situation of our affairs was, to my mind, so serious as to put me into one of my melancholic moods and to make me feel, as I often did in the greater war, that, what with want of patriotism and lack of spirit, only that Providence in which I have always trusted could carry us through a great peril. As usual, a brisk ride jolted me into a more hopeful state of mind.

I lay for a day at Winchester in a poor tavern, cared for by the general's man, Bishop. There, to my comfort, came Lord Fairfax, who had the kindness to bring with

him a good horse, which I was the better pleased to have because what became of the horse the general would have had me have I was never able to hear. His lordship insisted that I rest at Greenway Court until I was more fit to travel. I had here many letters; one said that I was given up for killed, and there was come a long story about my dying speech. My mother was in a sad worry about me, and when she received my letter contradicting my death, and that I had never composed any dying speech, she declared I was always making her anxious and had no right to distress her by doing things that gave her occasion to think I was dead. His lordship overcame my objections, and I remained with him at the court several days, well pleased to be at rest.

When alone with Lord Fairfax, he showed me the affection and concern which, like myself, he was averse to displaying in company. After I had been made to give him a full account of the march and the battle, he said: "You will be wise to write and to say little of what took place, and to let others say what they will. The men who, having done something worthy of praise,

do not incline to speak of it, are sure to be enough spoken of by others."

This was much as in any case I inclined to do, so that until now I have nowhere related this matter at length, and, as to the diary kept on our march, the French had it, and I saved only two or three letters.

What his lordship wrote of this disastrous business and of me to his friends in London, I do not know, but I was soon aware that both in England and in the colonies I was more praised than I deserved to be.

In 1758, a second British force, under Colonel Grant, was defeated in like manner as Braddock had been, but this was at the outworks of Fort Duquesne. In November of that same year I served under General Forbes and saw once more this disastrous neighbourhood. The hillside where we suffered such disgraceful and needless defeat was a miserable sight, for there were here scattered bits of red uniform and the bones of men and horses bleached in the sun.

At this time the garrison had fled, after succeeding in part to burn the fort, but no great damage done. I myself raised the

flag of his Majesty over the ruins which had cost the lives of so many brave men.

I lingered longer at Greenway Court than was needful to repair my broken health, for what his lordship had to say of men and of passing events I found instructive, and the counsels he gave to agree with my own disposition.

I received here a letter from my mother, entreating me not to engage further in the military line, but giving no good reasons, so that I had to reply that she should more consider my honour and what duty I owed to my country than to grieve over what might not result in misfortune, or if it did, was to be accepted as better for me than to have failed to be worthy of the esteem of just men. When I spoke of this letter to Lord Fairfax, he said I had answered with entire propriety.

I reached Mount Vernon, as my diary shows, on July 26, at 4 P.M., a poorer man for my campaigning, and, I feared, with a good constitution much impaired.

Soon after I returned I received several letters congratulating me on my escape unhurt, and expressing a general satisfaction that amidst so much cowardice and ill man-

agement the rangers behaved with spirit and courage.

Among these communications one which afforded me more than ordinary pleasure was from Mr. Benjamin Franklin. Besides what he found fit to say of me, were certain reflections which, at this distant day, seem to nourish my inclination to look forward now, as he did then, desirous, as all must be, to discern from the present what the future alone can surely disclose.

Indeed, as I have descended the vale of life I have had increasing need to consider what the years would bring about, for to endeavour to forecast the future is one of the duties of a statesman.

Mr. Franklin, when in his last illness, said to General Knox, who spoke of it to Mrs. Washington, that I possessed the capacity to look forward in a way which, he said, was one of the forms of imagination, but that I had not the gift of fancy. I am not assured even now that I fully understand what he desired to convey by this statement.

The letter which gave rise in my mind to these reflections contains one of those light statements which I have never found myself able to employ, and which do not assist me

to understand the affair in hand, or to comprehend any better what is desired to be conveyed.

Philadelphia.

To Colonel George Washington.

RESPECTED SIR: I am the richer for having had the opportunity of making your acquaintance, and I ought not to conceal from you the pleasure I have had in learning of late that your conduct in the humiliating defeat of General Braddock was such as to be a matter of just pride to the colonies.

Affairs with us, and indeed with all the colonies, are in a condition greatly to be deplored. We are, as it appears to me, much in the same state as a man I knew who, having married four times, had as a consequence four mothers-in-law, all of whom were of opinion that they had the right to meddle in his family affairs. These are, for us, the King, the Parliament, the Lords of Trade, and the Governors. For all of them we are a family of bad little boys. We, on the other hand, entertain the belief that we are grown-up Englishmen, who believe that we inherit certain rights. Soon or late mischief will come of it. The eggs of trouble are slow to hatch, but they do surely hatch soon or late and are never addled.

It would be worse than folly to conceal from

you my fears as to the future. There are limitations to what men like our colonists, accustomed to a large measure of individual freedom, will endure. We seem to me to have gone back a century and to be at the commencement of just such a struggle with the crown as then occurred.

I was interested in what you said of the great coldness of a spring at Mount Vernon. I will, when opportunity serves, send you a good thermometer, when I think you will find that your wells have near about what is the average heat of the air for the entire year.

I hope to hear from you at your convenience, and, believe me, I shall feel myself honoured by any such mark of your attention, and that I am, with respect,

Your ob'd't humble servant,
Benjamin Franklin.

P.S. I venture to enclose one of my almanacs.
B. F.

I gave this almanac and the letter to be read to my Lord Fairfax. He returned them, saying that what was said of the way of governing the colonies was true, but that Mr. Franklin overstated what was to be feared in the future; and as to the almanac, damn the man's little maxims! They smelt of New England.

XL

THIS account of my youth I have for the present put aside to be considered later, whether to destroy it or not.

I discover in writing these remembrances that I have found pleasure in recalling many small circumstances which I had forgot. I also observe that, as I have written very little but letters in my life, the habit of writing as if for another's eyes than my own has prevailed, without intention on my part; but this can do no harm, seeing that all this has been set down only in order that I may for my own satisfaction consider as an old man what judgment I should pass on my acts as a young one.

As I shall retain for a season what I have written, I desire that, in case of accident to me, these pages should not for a long time be allowed to come to the general eye. The letters left among these leaves I intend to restore to their proper files.

DIARY—DECEMBER 7, 1799

Rainy morning; mercury at 37. Afternoon clear and pleasant. Dined with Lord Fairfax at Belvoir.

In the evening felt somewhat a lowness of mind, and am reminded, as I write, that I have never had the inclination to set down in my diary other than practical matters. To distract my thoughts, I began to run over what was wrote last year and to consider of what has passed since I wrote, and of what must be done with what was written. My late brother Charles dying in September, I am the only male left of the second marriage. We are no long-lived people, and when I shall be called to follow them is known only to the Giver of Life. When the summons comes, I shall endeavour to obey it with a good grace.

I have had much anxiety during the past two years concerning my country, and especially as to the indignities inflicted on us by the French, and a certain relief not to be again called, at my age, into the field. I may have been too anxious, but a bystander sees more of the game than they who are playing, and I believe I have had cause to

feel uneasy. But the Ship of State is afloat, or very nearly so, and, considering myself as a passenger only, I shall trust to Heaven and the mariners, whose duty it is to steer us into a safe port of peace and prosperity.

[The general died on December fourteenth of this year, seventeen hundred and ninety-nine.]

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